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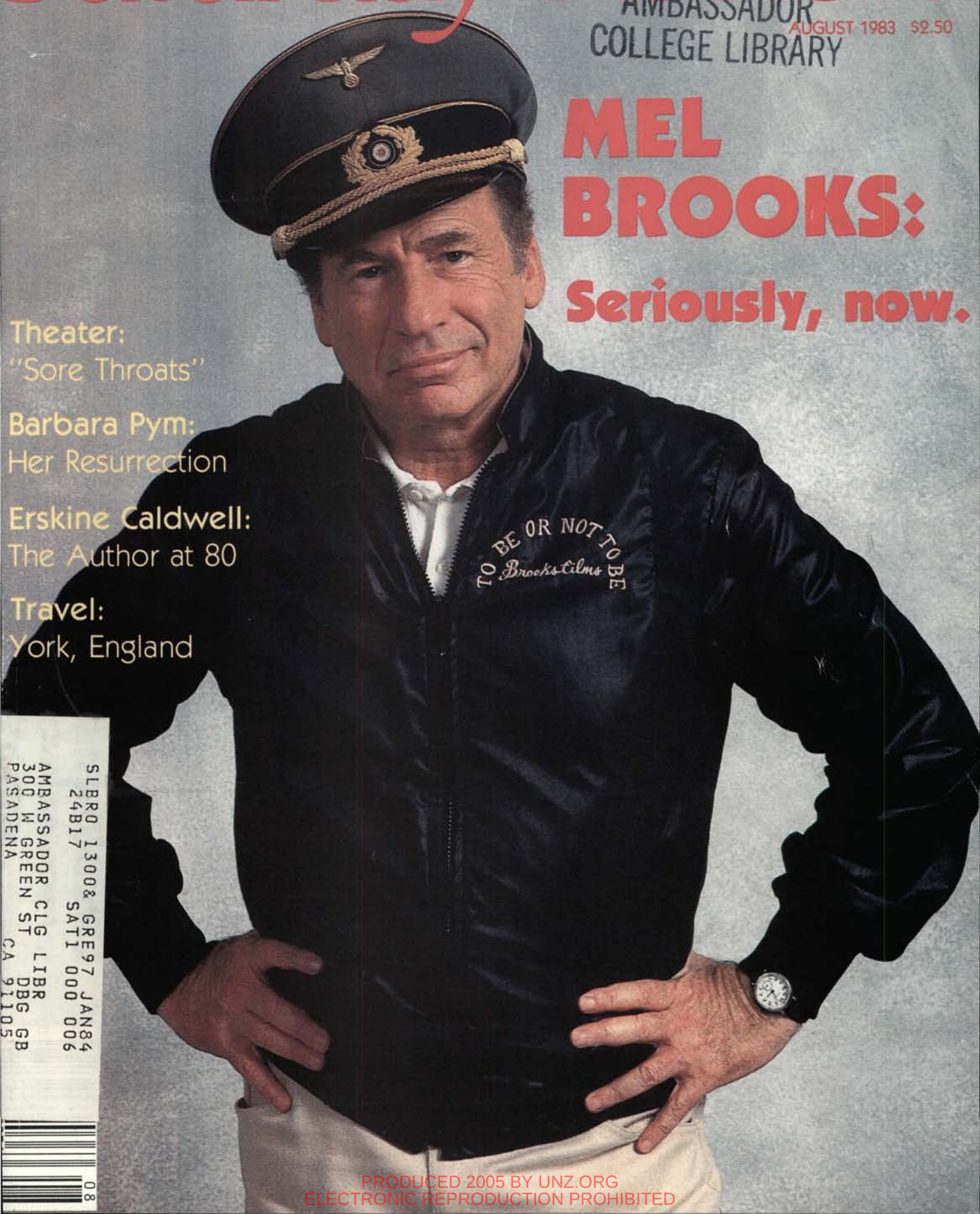

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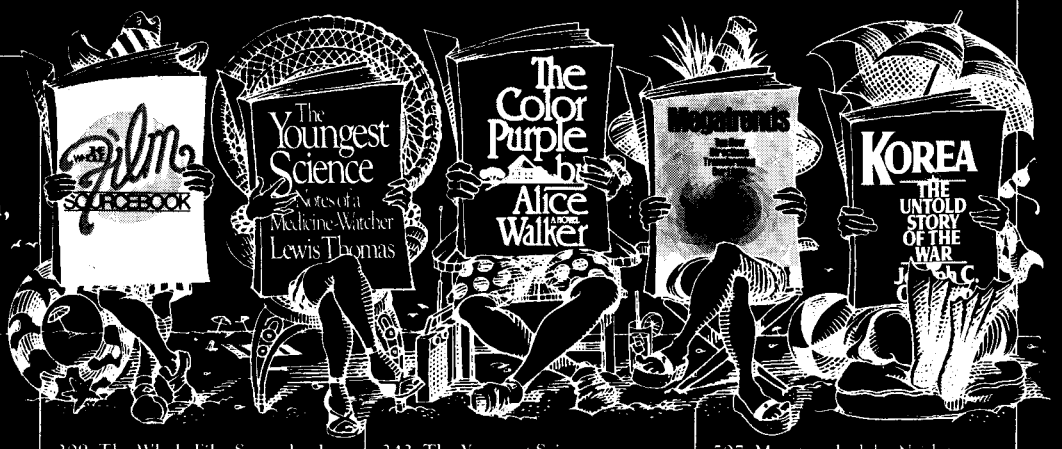

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LETTERS

Saturday Review

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In his essay "It Gets My Goats," Thomas Middleton provided foods for thought. I thank him for those informations.

Hines L. Wommack
Americus, Georgia

So tell me, the article on Fassbinder (and the photograph) in the May-June issue of SR is tongue-in-cheek, right? Sort of an upscale imitation of *The National Lampoon?* I was really impressed with the light touch used to serve up all the overcooked-oatmeal kind of nonintellectualism. As soon as I realized it was a joke, I got a real kick out of it, especially the "beautiful murder." That killed me.

Now, the stuff on Garrison Keillor was a delight in a much more solid way. A more real human being is hard to find.

I'm enjoying the magazine very much. I can't get over those two articles in the same issue. Just makes you grateful for people like Keillor, and glad guys like Fassbinder don't really exist.

Patricia Goudey
Sharon, Massachusetts

It was an exhilarating surprise to find *SR* once again in my mailbox. I suddenly realized, when the magazine ceased publication, that I was paid up through May 1987. Now, with the bimonthly issues, my subscription is extended until May 1990.

I am 72 years old. Can I meet the challenge of survival until 1990? Since *SR* has a new lease on life, I have "put-in" for one too, and look forward in 1990 to renewing my subscription to 1993.

Jean C. Ross
Rutland, Vermont

So you misused the word *wean* in the March-April issue. Not to worry. In the May-June issue you have more than redeemed yourself. At last, someone who allows the word *adage* to stand alone without the ever-present, ever-redundant *old* inserted in front!

Susan Hall
Portland, Oregon

How great to find you in my mailbox last month, and even greater to find this month's *SR* with Norman Cousins blasting away to sharpen educators, a good review of *Prairie Home Companion*, and the friendly, smiling face of Ken Kesey on the cover! What a great direction—GO.

Marjorie King
Reno, Nevada

Please address letters for publication to: Letters to the Editor, Saturday Review, *1205 University Avenue, Columbia, MO 65201. Letters are edited for space and clarity. We cannot acknowledge or return unused letters.*

Correction: In the May-June issue, the byline of Trade Winds columnist William Cole was omitted.

"Goodbye John, I'm leaving you now that the weather's nice."

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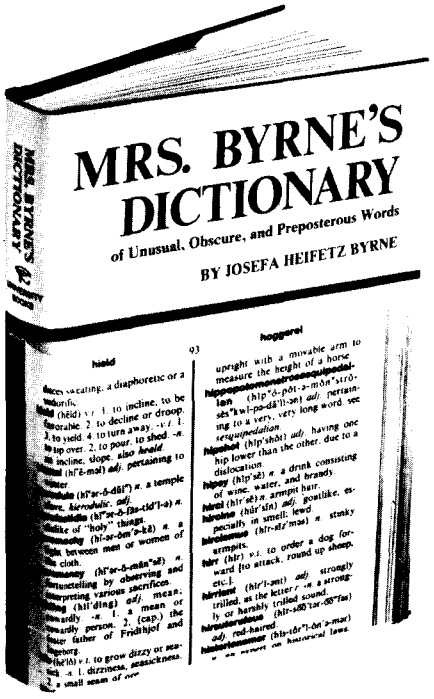
For years I suffered terribly from

LETHOLOGICA

until a nice doctor friend prescribed

Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary of Unusual, Obscure, and Preposterous Words



Yes, for years I couldn't remember the right words. People I considered complete idiots were finishing my sentences for me. I was leaving blanks in my love letters and suicide notes. I found how bleak the future was when I tried a little cephalonamancy (fortunetelling by boiling an ass head), and tyromancy (fortunetelling by watching cheese coagulate).

I went from doctor to doctor looking for help, finally becoming a confirmed iatrapistiac (one having little faith in doctors), especially when one suggested I needed a hepaticocholangiocholecystenterostomy (look it up).

Then I found *Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary*. Now I can be unusual, obscure and preposterous by turns. Now I don't need an unabridged to go along with my collegiate. For entertainment now, I browse instead of groak (watching people silently while they eat, hoping they'll ask you to join them). I don't care anymore that we have a kakistocracy (government or rule by the worst).

Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary by Josefa Heifetz is better than omphaloskepsis!

GARDYLOO!

Herb Caen in the *San Francisco Chronicle:* "Wildly funny!"

Leslie Hanscom in *Newsday:* "You can dip in anywhere and come up with pay dirt . . . hundreds of words to stand your hair on end. Only a clinchpoop could scan these pages without a feeling of awe at the undiscovered boundaries of the English tongue!"

Nels Nelson in the *Philadelphia Daily News:* "A treasure! We should all kiss the publisher's feet!"

Camilla Snyder in the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner:* "Hilariously useful . . . delicious!"

Donald B. Thackrey of *United Press International:* "A dictionary you can browse through and read like a book . . . a dictionary that will give great pleasure to many. Every page contains at least one nugget."

Sydney J. Harris in the *Chicago Daily News:* "There is no comparable work; I unreservedly recommend it."

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EDITORIAL

Creativity as Therapy

Not long ago, I accepted an invitation to participate in the dedication ceremonies of a "Living Room" for cancer patients at St. Joseph's Hospital in Houston. The idea and design for the room came from Dr. John S. Stehlin, oncologist and surgeon. Dr. Stehlin had observed that patients whose hopes were high tended to get better results from medical and surgical treatment than did those who were despairing and defeatist. The Living Room broke sharply in appearance from conventional hospital facilities. It was brightly designed, an ideal center for creative activities. One section was well stocked with books. Another corner was set aside for persons who were interested in the fine arts. Still another area was equipped with videotape and audio machines. Dr. Stehlin had a rapidly expanding supply of comedy films.

Dr. Stehlin escorted me to the third floor. When we got off the elevator, the first thing I heard was the rich, full sound of laughter. Dr. Stehlin encourages the nuns at St. Joseph's to tell amusing stories to their patients as part of the daily fare. As we walked down the corridor, one of the nuns approached us. Dr. Stehlin picked her up, spun her around, and threatened not to put her down until she told us her story for the day.

"I'm ready for you," she said with enough of an Irish brogue to betray her ancestry. She began: "A man and a woman were sitting at a table in a night club. The lights were low and the music was sweet. The headwaiter looked over at them and was dismayed to see the man slip off his chair and disappear under the table. He rushed over and said, 'Madam, your husband has just fallen off his chair!' She replied, 'That's where you're wrong. My husband has just come into the room'."

We howled with laughter. Dr. Stehlin said he was going to steal her story for his dedication talk, which he did with great effect. Many of the leading townspeople were present, and were deeply impressed with what appeared to be a highly successful attempt to change the usually somber hospital atmosphere to one of colorful, upbeat expectations.

Other hospitals throughout the country have been moving in the same direction. One of the most innovative of them is the DeKalb Hospital in Atlanta, where the initiative of a citizen, Josephine Brodneaux, has led to the design of a "Lively Room" in which patients can engage in various creative interests. Mrs. Brodneaux persuaded John Lively, a prominent supporter of the hospital, to underwrite the new room. These two hospitals may be among the pioneers in employing the creative arts as integral parts of therapy, but they are by no means the only ones. A number of Veterans Administration hospitals have been making good use of attitudinal techniques. Physicians at the Sepulveda, California, VA Hospital report an improvement in the general condition of cancer patients as a result of the new programs.

Why should a mood of happiness and cheerfulness play such a helpful role in recovery efforts? The question is being studied by leading medical researchers. Here at the UCLA Brain Institute under Dr. Carmine Clemente, important work is going forward on the biochemical effects of the emotions. At the Harvard University Medical School, the apparent ability of the human brain to write discrete prescriptions for the body is being studied. Dr. Richard Bergland is developing evidence that the brain is able not just to produce and activate a wide array of secretions, but to combine secretions in meeting the body's discrete needs. The way these secretions are affected by attitudes may be one of the most promising areas in medical research today.

We have long known that negative emotions—panic, fear, frustration, rage, depression, despair—have bad physiological effects.

Certain aspects of the question are understood. We have long known that negative emotions—panic, fear, frustration, rage, depression, despair—have bad physiological effects. They can wreak havoc in the body's endocrine system and destabilize the heart. All these emotions, in varying degrees and circumstances, figure in serious illness. By helping to block these adverse processes, the positive emotions play a powerful role in the restoration and maintenance of good health and human functioning.

—N.C.

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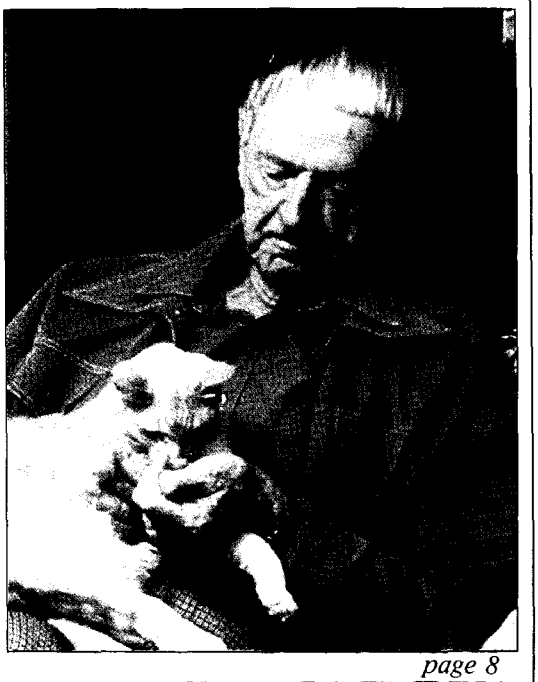

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Summer Opera Festivals

Three world premieres, three American premieres, and several new operatic productions grace the 1983 summer opera season. Opera's growth is evident by the increasing number of summer opera companies and festivals and by the diversity of the repertoire being presented across the country. Here are highlights of the next two months:

New York City Opera is expanding its fall season into the summer, opening July 7. During July and August, the company will embark on its Puccini Festival, presenting six of the Italian master's works. *Turandot*, which was unfinished at Puccini's death, opens the season and will feature the American premiere of the opera's planned ending, as realized by Franco Alfano. Other performances include *Die Fledermaus, Lucia di Lammermoor, La Fanciulla del West, Candide, La Boheme, The Mikado, Carmen, La Rondine, and The Magic Flute.*

In commemoration of the centenary of Wagner's death, Seattle Opera presents *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The German version of the cycle will be presented in July, and the English version, scheduled for August, will be the only complete English production in the world this year.

The Wolf Trap Opera Company in Vienna, Virginia, has produced Cavalli's *La Calisto*, Donizetti's *The Tutor's Dilemma*, and a cabaret program of Kurt Weill's *Mahagonny Songspiel*. John Dankworth's *Sweeney Agonistes* will be presented in August. The company also will perform the Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson opera, *The Mother of Us All*, in a new production by Stanley Silverman.

The world premiere of a new American comic opera will highlight the twenty-second season of the Lake George Opera Festival. *The Adventures of Friar Tuck* will premiere at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. Other productions include *Kiss Me Kate*, and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

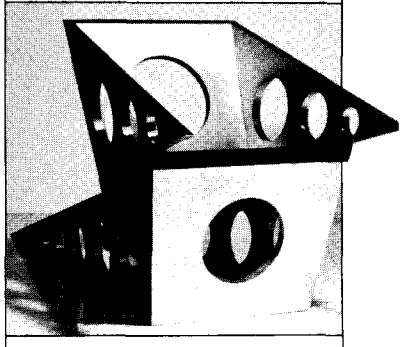
The Santa Fe Opera's open-air theater will host five new productions, including the American premiere of Raymond Leppard's realization of Cavalli's *L'Orione*, as well as *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Don Pasquale*, *Arabella*, and *The Turn of the Screw*.

In Colorado's Central City, a historically preserved gold-mining town in the Rockies, the Opera House Association will present productions of *La Traviata* and *The Elixir of Love*. The Colorado Opera Festival will open the new Pikes Peak Center with *Carmen* and *The Barber of Seville*.

The Cincinnati Opera, which has the oldest summer opera festival in the U.S., opened its season in late June with the U.S. premiere in English of Franco Alfano's *Resurrection*, based on the Tolstoy novel. In July, the company presents Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, and Mozart's *Cosi fan tutte*. □

"Scott Burton Chairs"

In 1973, the New York-based artist Scott Burton began creating objects with a dual identity: though recognizable as tables, chairs, benches, and stools, his works are sculpture as well as furniture. By creating objects familiar to any observer, he disputes attitudes that isolate art from human experience. Burton extends this philosophy by making his work functionally accessible; he



***Aluminum Chair*, Burton.**

***Dead Crane*, Jean-Baptiste Oudry.**

Jean-Baptiste Oudry

Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755) was one of the most prolific and versatile artists of the first half of the eighteenth century. He was immensely popular in his day, and his paintings and drawings were distributed all over Europe by the time of his death. Today they are much less familiar than those of his contemporaries.

Oudry is best known as a painter to Louis XV of dogs and of the hunt, but he was also a portraitist, a landscapist, an illustrator, a great master of illusion, and an attentive student of natural history. At the beginning of his career, Oudry learned the color method of Nicolas de Largillierre, his master, to which he added an even more acute vision of nature. His greatest and most original artistic contributions lie in landscape, still life, and animal painting. Sensitivity to light—a principal feature of his renderings of forests, fields, and gardens around Paris—sets his landscapes apart from the imaginary scenes of other French painters of the time. His still lifes are masterpieces of the study of color, and they have a direct and simple illusionism that is faintly surreal. Oudry's numerous pictures of animals and the hunt reveal a new attitude toward man's place in nature.

An exhibition of Oudry's paintings and drawings is being presented jointly by the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, the Musee de Louvre, Paris, and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri. The catalogue accompanying the exhibition is a major contribution to the scholarly reassessment currently under way of the overlooked and misunderstood period between the Grand Siecle of Louis XIV and the Revolution. Oudry played a key role in helping to replace the elite basis of art with an appeal to a broader public. The catalogue discusses and illustrates major works from public and private collections in Europe and North America, and is the first comprehensive study in English of Oudry's art. The exhibition will be at the Nelson-Atkins Museum from July 16 to September 4. □

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wants spectators to use his art in its objective role. Chairs are central in Burton's work. Of furniture, the chair to him is the most vital. While other furniture functions to support objects or is structurally dull, a chair supports and conforms to the human body. The chair has been used as a motif in contemporary works of art by Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns, Lucas Samaras, Richard Artschwanger, George Brecht, Jane Kaplowitz, Joel Schapiro, and Judy Chicago. For Burton, the chair is the essential art object. His designs are simple and clear, and through his art he addresses the issues of Realism, of the role of the observer, and of historical eclecticism.

Born in Alabama in 1939, Burton has received degrees from Columbia University and New York University. His work has been featured in individual exhibitions in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and elsewhere and has been included in group exhibitions at the Guggenheim and Whitney museums. Currently he is completing sculpture commissions for the city of Seattle and for the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. *Scott Burton Chairs*, an exhibition of his work, has been organized by the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati and the Fort Worth Art Museum. The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis features the exhibit from July 10 to August 21; from there it travels to Fort Worth and Houston. □

"Yō no Bi"

The first of the special exhibitions planned for this year to celebrate the Seattle Art Museum's fiftieth anniversary is *Yō no Bi: The Beauty of Japanese Folk Art*. The exhibition explores the Japanese aesthetic as expressed in commonplace objects from the fourteenth to the twentieth centuries. Included are almost 200 objects, gathered from forty-eight private and museum collections in the Seattle area. On view are paintings, sculpture, woodwork, metalwork, ceramics, basketry, lacquer, bamboo, and textiles. These express the beauty in utility, or *yō no bi: yō* means *function*, *bi* means *beauty*, and *no* binds *beauty* to *function*. The exhibit has started and runs to September 18. □

New Art from Germany

The Saint Louis Art Museum presents the first major U.S. exhibition of the new German Abstract-Figurative Expressionism. The works of five artists in the forefront of German Expressionism have been selected for the exhibition: Georg Baselitz, Jörg Immendorff, Anselm Kiefer, Markus Lüpertz, and A.R. Penck. These artists have influenced the international art world since the late 1970s and have made important contributions to international exhibitions in Berlin, Kassel, Venice, and London. Although some of their works have been shown in New York galleries, no substantial grouping has been assembled in the U.S. Although their messages are distinct, they collectively represent the mature foundation for much of the phenomenal surge of Expressionist activity in Germany. The exhibition picks up the work of each artist at the time he began to make a significant contribution. Several of the artists will be in St. Louis for the opening.

The more than 100 works to appear in the exhibit include paintings by each artist, large sculptures, and groups of drawings on loan mostly from European collections. A major trade-edition catalogue is being published by Prestel Verlag in German and English. The catalogue contains fifty color plates, seventy-five black-and-white illustrations, a critical bibliography, biographies, and other material intended to make the book a standard reference for this period in art. The exhibition runs in St. Louis from June 25 to August 21 and travels to Long Island, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, Newport Beach, California, and Washington, D.C. □

Dance from France

Compagnie Karine Saporta.

The American Dance Festival in Durham, North Carolina, is in its sixth season. This year the festival features seven premieres and twenty-one outstanding companies, including five French dance companies making their U.S. debut the week of July 11 through 16. This French gathering includes Ballet Theatre de L'Arche, Compagnie Dominique Bagouet, Compagnie Karine Saporta, Compagnie de Dance L'Esquisse, and Caroline Marcade et Compagnie. Their appearance is a joint project of the American Dance Festival and the Festival of Dance at Aix-en-Provence. The companies will also appear at the Pepsico Summerfare at Purchase, New York, the following week. These companies offer a sampling of the exciting directions in which French modern dance is developing.

Another French dance company arrives in North America for a three-city tour this summer. Roland Petit's Ballet National de Marseille began their tour with a two-week engagement at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on June 21. On July 5 the company opens a one-week appearance in Montreal, and on July 18 arrives in New York City for a two-week engagement at The Metropolitan Opera House. Natalia Makarova, Rudolf Nureyev, Richard Cragun, and Patrick Dupond will be guests of the Ballet National during its stay in New York. This will be the first time that Makarova and Nureyev dance together in New York. The company will present three programs, including two full-length ballets, *Marcel Proust Remembered* and *Notre Dame de Paris;* the latter is based on the Victor Hugo novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and has the first theatrical costumes ever designed by Yves Saint-Laurent. The program of three short ballets includes *Soiree Debussy*, *L'Arlesienne*, and *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort*. □

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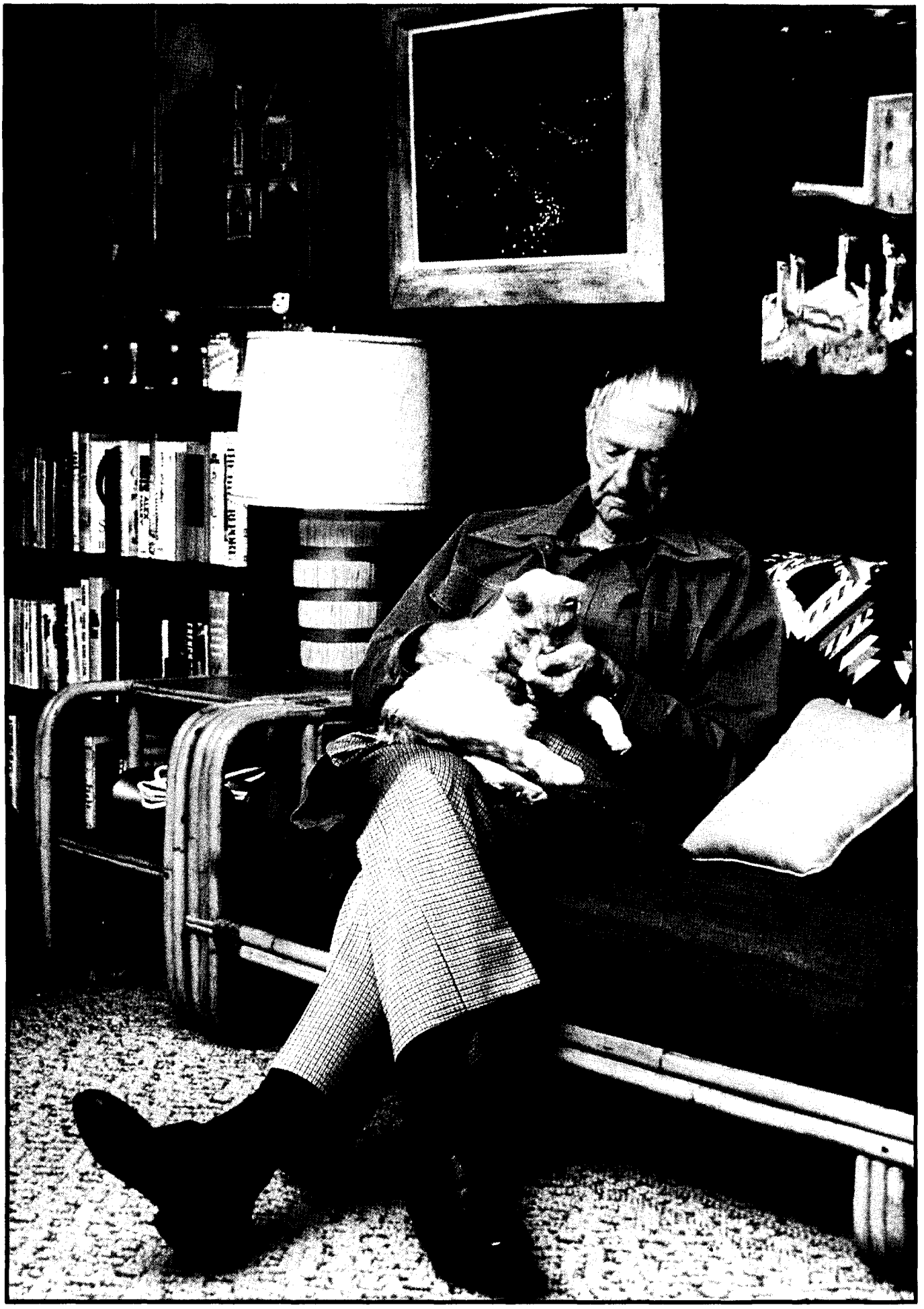

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THE SR INTERVIEW

A Good Listener Speaks

Fifty-one years ago, novelist Erskine Caldwell shocked the literary world with "Tobacco Road." Today, at 80, he reflects upon his life and career.

BY KAY BONETTI

Erskine Caldwell is the author of more than forty-five books. His works have been translated into at least forty languages and have sold over 65 million copies worldwide. His first novel, Tobacco Road, *published in 1932, immediately stirred both praise and controversy because of its earthy depiction of poverty-stricken Southerners. The book was adapted to the stage by John Kirkland and ran eight years on Broadway (1933-1941). In 1933 Caldwell's second novel,* God's Little Acre, *was published and firmly launched his career.*

Ever the wanderer, Caldwell has lived and worked in all sections of the country and served as a foreign correspondent in Russia, Spain, Mexico, and Czechoslovakia. Now 80, he lives in Phoenix, where this conversation took place.

SR *Where did you get your strong sense of social justice?*

CALDWELL I think it derived from the fact that I grew up in the agricultural South, fifty or sixty years after the Civil War. The remnants of that society still existed. There was the imposition of the white person upon the black person, which was the aftermath of slavery. It became so violent that, during my early life, lynching was a summer pastime all over the South. Tuskegee College had a whole department devoted to statistics regarding lynching. I grew up with this inhumanity by the white against the black. I had a lot of contact with the black people; my playmate was a black boy, a "yard boy," we called him. When you are friendly with somebody you abhor any injustice that person might have thrust upon him. A Negro might not have been working fast enough for the white boys, so they would beat him with an ax handle. What could the poor fellow do? He couldn't fight back, he'd get lynched. The people in charge of political life put the black people on chain gangs. Chain gangs have died out now, but for many years, if the road commissioner needed some work done on his highways, he wouldn't pay money to do it: the chain gang would supply the work force. If a black man bumped a white man on the street he was liable to be put on the chain gang the next day.

SR *But not everybody saw that as being wrong, and you were vilified and criticized for writing about this.*

CALDWELL Oh, nobody liked being told about it, because they wanted to keep the chain-gang institution well manned. So if you criticized that, they said you were not true to the white race. Anybody could have seen the same things I saw and had the kind of response I did. I just lived all over and saw a great variety of it.

SR *Do you think your father and mother were an influence?*

CALDWELL Well, my father was a sociologist more than anything. He had a great feeling about injustice, especially poverty. He introduced me to the people he knew, who make up the characters of *Tobacco Road*. He would take me and show me people who were in dire distress.

SR *Were you writing to try to change those conditions?*

CALDWELL No, that would have been propaganda. I could have written about it as an essay for somebody to interpret, but I did not write to influence. What influence came out of it was the fact that somebody read it and had the same feeling I had that this should be changed. I was not the one to change it.

SR *You said recently that your beginning as a writer was more a question of learning to listen than of learning to write. Would you elaborate?*

CALDWELL Anyone learning to be a writer has to have a background, or foundation, of life itself. You can't learn from a book what another person is or is not. You have to hear life as it is lived. When I wanted to learn something in my early days I was a listener, never a talker. That did me a very good turn, because I'm still not a talker, I'm a writer. I don't even read other people's books to any great extent.

SR *Did you hear stories when you were growing up, and did this have any effect on the kind of writing that you attempted?*

CALDWELL Probably my formative years were between the ages of 10 and 17. We lived in a number of Southern states and every year we'd move to a new place. Even though life was different in every subsequent move, the texture of life was about the same. I was fortunate enough to live in small

Kay Bonetti is project director of the American Audio Prose Library, which is funded by the Missouri Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and KOPN Radio, Columbia, Missouri.

Erskine Caldwell at home.

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towns. There would be two or three stores, a post office, a sawmill. I learned a lot by just listening. Storytelling achieved its ultimate height just before the agricultural empire was broken down and the South became industrialized, which happened after World War II. Around the stores and shops—that's where storytelling actually flowered. Anyone who was exposed to that had to be influenced. I was, to a great extent. I did not try to imitate or transpose storytelling into written form. I wanted to create my own, but I had to have the background, to know the kind of people and the kind of life they lived, and that was what contributed to what I have written.

SR *Do you feel you have an ear for the rhythms of speech?*

CALDWELL I do not try to write the dialect of the people, because it's such a tedious kind of thing, and if you look at it on a piece of paper it's just a conglomeration of misplaced words, misspelled words, and it doesn't mean anything. The rhythm of speech is the important part of trying to translate dialect into ordinary language. I try to find the rhythm of speech rather than imitate sounds in print.

SR *You have said that journalism gave you your schooling in writing. Would you elaborate?*

CALDWELL Journalism in the broadest sense is relating the events of the day. You have to write every day to be a journalist. It's the best thing that I know of for anybody trying to be a writer. The thing to do is to learn a journalist's way of work: get up early, stay at work all day. Don't sit around waiting for inspiration. You must be prepared in case it does come, so you can use it.

SR *You have said that if you're going to be a writer you can't be a reader. Why do you think that's true for you?*

CALDWELL That's difficult. People will look at you askance and say, "What's the matter with you? Are you illiterate?" I have to admit that I'm more interested in what I'm writing than in what someone else has written. Not that I feel in competition or am jealous. If you are going to just be a critic and read other people's books, trying to emulate them, I don't think you are going to succeed.

SR *Some self-taught writers say that they wonder if having studied under another writer would have saved them time, grief, false moves, and stories they threw away.*

CALDWELL I was sort of a tramp scholar. I went from one college to another all over the country and never graduated. My education was the variety of life that I encountered: delivering milk at 3 a.m., working at a 5-and-10 store in the basement. These experiences contributed to my understanding of life, and the way I wanted to write. I found out that I didn't want to be a milkman all my life. I wanted to write stories. I approve of education, but it just was not for me.

> *"I didn't consider that I was doing something that I shouldn't. I just thought it was natural to make a story as compelling as possible."*

SR *In those early years when you were teaching yourself to write, were you conscious at the time of just how experimental those stories were?*

CALDWELL I did a lot of experimental writing. Of the 150 short stories I've written, I doubt if more than two or three are written in the same manner, style, background. Everything had to be a little bit different with me, otherwise I was bored. I didn't have any hard and fast rules in the beginning. I wanted to create something that would interest me, not you, or any other reader. I write for myself. There are millions of readers. Every reader is different: how are you going to write for the reader? I have to please myself. After I'm pleased, then I'm willing to let someone else have a go at it.

SR *Did you ever sit down at any point in those early years and go back over what you had written to see what you'd learned?*

CALDWELL No. I never look back. It's always looking forward to new ideas, new locales, new thoughts. I do not read what I have written unless I'm imposed upon to read for a recording, things like that. But I do not read for the amazement or amusement of myself. Once I have finished a short story or a novel I am through with it. I don't even want to read the proof. I let somebody else do that. Actually, I'll probably write a short story ten or fifteen times before I'll let it be finished. By that time I will have exhausted all my capacity to improve it.

SR *Character is one of your strong points, even in your short stories. Was this something you were striving for?*

CALDWELL I write about people. To me that's the important ingredient: what his influences are on his surroundings and how his surroundings influence him as a character, and how he is deviating from the norm.

SR *Many think* Georgia Boy *is your best book. This collection is very different from your other books in that the stories in it are all related. How did you come up with this form?*

CALDWELL It was written over a period of seven to ten years. I wrote it during a period when I was traveling, and I probably wrote some from as far away as the Soviet Union, when I was a journalist. I know I wrote some when I moved to Arizona the first time and got out of the chain gang of Hollywood. I had no idea I would write enough to make a book. Once I got started I would always have another idea. There was no progressive thought, no beginning or end, just a collection put together of everyday existence and events.

SR *You have said that the short story is the form for you. Why is that?*

CALDWELL I like the short story because you don't have to conform to the commercial idea of a novel, which must have so many pages. A short story can be one page, or fifty.

SR *Is the novel a harder form in which to work?*

CALDWELL It's more demanding in the sense that you are compelled to spend more time doing one theme. The novel is subject to being too long for the subject matter. I have always tried to write a novel no more than 200 to 250 pages. I have been asked by publishers to write a big, long novel, but I don't want to. I stick to the briefest way you can go.

SR *A lot of readers have commented*

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on the mode of repetition that you use. Handsome Brown and the Goats *is a good example, because if you analyze why it is so uproariously funny, one of the keys is the repetition by Handsome Brown that his arches are hurting him. Is this repetition something you were conscious of?*

CALDWELL Yes, repetition is necessary; it's like refrain in music. If it's pertinent, adaptable to your idea, then it's an important ingredient in making a point, so long as it doesn't get monotonous or too obvious.

SR *One of "those professors" that I know you are so unfond of has written an essay about your stories in which he talks about this technique. He refers to stories like* Candyman Beecham *as prose-poem ballads. Are you comfortable with that interpretation?*

CALDWELL It was written with the rhythm of speech. The whole thing started with that idea. The dialect emphasized the life of the black man who was happy-go-lucky, half-free from white domination. The rhythm of it was the essential part of the story. I wouldn't know any other way to write that particular story. I don't know about the "ballad."

SR *Did you, or do you, have a sense of how much ahead of your time you were?*

CALDWELL I had no recognition of that. I didn't know what the times were; I only knew of the time I was living in. It never occurred to me to find out if I was with it, ahead of it, or behind it. I was writing about contemporary life as I observed it.

SR *Your stories are full of a keen sensitivity to all kinds of injustice, but you deal particularly well with those issues that concern women.*

CALDWELL That's just the same general feeling that I have about people and life. I don't consider anyone superior to others, whether they are Democrat or Republican, black or white, man or woman. I don't have any prejudices.

SR *People tried to ban your work. How did you weather this?*

CALDWELL I didn't see any difference between what I was writing and what somebody else was writing. I didn't consider that I was doing something that I shouldn't. I just thought it was natural to make a story as compelling as possible.

SR *Did it make you angry or bitter?*

CALDWELL No. You have to accept criticism. People will say you are illiterate, don't know how to tell a story, have no plot, that your characters are reprehensible. If you are going to take criticism very seriously, then you will stop writing anything. You're not going to get 100 percent approval. It's the same thing with censorship—a matter of opinion.

SR *Despite the fact that your publishing history was very prestigious in those early years, accompanied by awards such as the Yale Review Prize and the O. Henry Prize, critical opinion began to turn against your work. What did you think these people were saying that was particularly mistaken?*

CALDWELL I think they were unfamiliar with what I was writing about. The language I used in the stage version of *Tobacco Road* upset a lot of people because it was something that was not done in those days. The poverty was known, but nobody wanted to look at it. They knew people were hungry, ragged, but they didn't think it was a good idea to show it in public. Most of the critics were isolated from life, living in their own little vacuum. The critics who wrote these reviews weren't familiar with the lives I was writing about, so they thought it was exaggerated. Well, it was. Everything has to be exaggerated in fiction and on the stage. You can't put down life verbatim or it would be too dull. You have to pick out the highlights and the lowlights. They took the idea that what I was doing was sensationalism.

SR *You engineered the American Folkways project, in which you found writers to write books about their regions.*

CALDWELL That was a moonlighting job that let me travel around America. Between writing my own books I'd have a month or two off and would be traveling somewhere, so this was suited to my way of life. Over five to six years we finally accumulated a library of about twenty-five volumes. These were people I had known or who had been recognized. I'd go to see the person and talk with him on the kind of writing he would produce; then I would select him and the publisher would give him a contract. The book would be sent to me and I'd look at it and pass it on to the editor.

SR *Was your motive to travel?*

CALDWELL No, my motive was to promote the regionalism of the country. I've always been a regional writer, and I think the best writing is regional. To write about the Cajuns of Louisiana, the Mexicans along the Rio Grande, the Indians of New Mexico, to me that is regionalism, and what I wanted to do was to bring out these various sections of life in America, because every part of the country is different—at least, until we got radio and everybody tried to lose their accent. So we're losing our Southern accents, and our New England accents, because everybody tries to talk like Walter Cronkite.

SR *Do you think that writing is by necessity a very solitary thing that cuts you off?*

CALDWELL There have been instances when people would get together to form a school of writing. In the old days it was in Greenwich Village. Everybody would meet and praise each other's work. It never appealed to me, and in order to avoid it I didn't know very many writers. The fewer writers you know, the easier it is to avoid being caught up in that mishmash of literaryism which to me is a very deadly kind of existence.

SR *Yet, you were friends with William Saroyan and Nathaniel West. What was different about them?*

CALDWELL They were free-minded people who didn't follow the crowd or belong to a certain group. They did not write by formula. They were very creative; you've got to be creative if you're going to be a fiction writer, otherwise you're just a hack. And Saroyan was no hack, by any means. I admired his ability to withstand the pressure to conform.

SR *William Faulkner named you, along with himself, as one of the five finest contemporary writers in America. He praised you for your plain style. Is this a phrase that you feel comfortable with?*

CALDWELL I never think in those terms. I'm just an ordinary writer, I'm nothing special; so I don't have to have that kind of appreciation. I can do without it. All I'm interested in are the books that I've written. I'm just the writer. The books speak for themselves. ■

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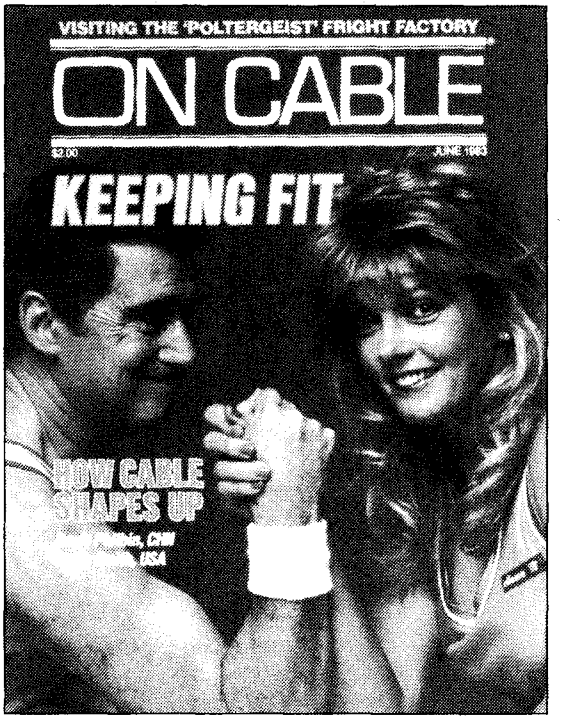

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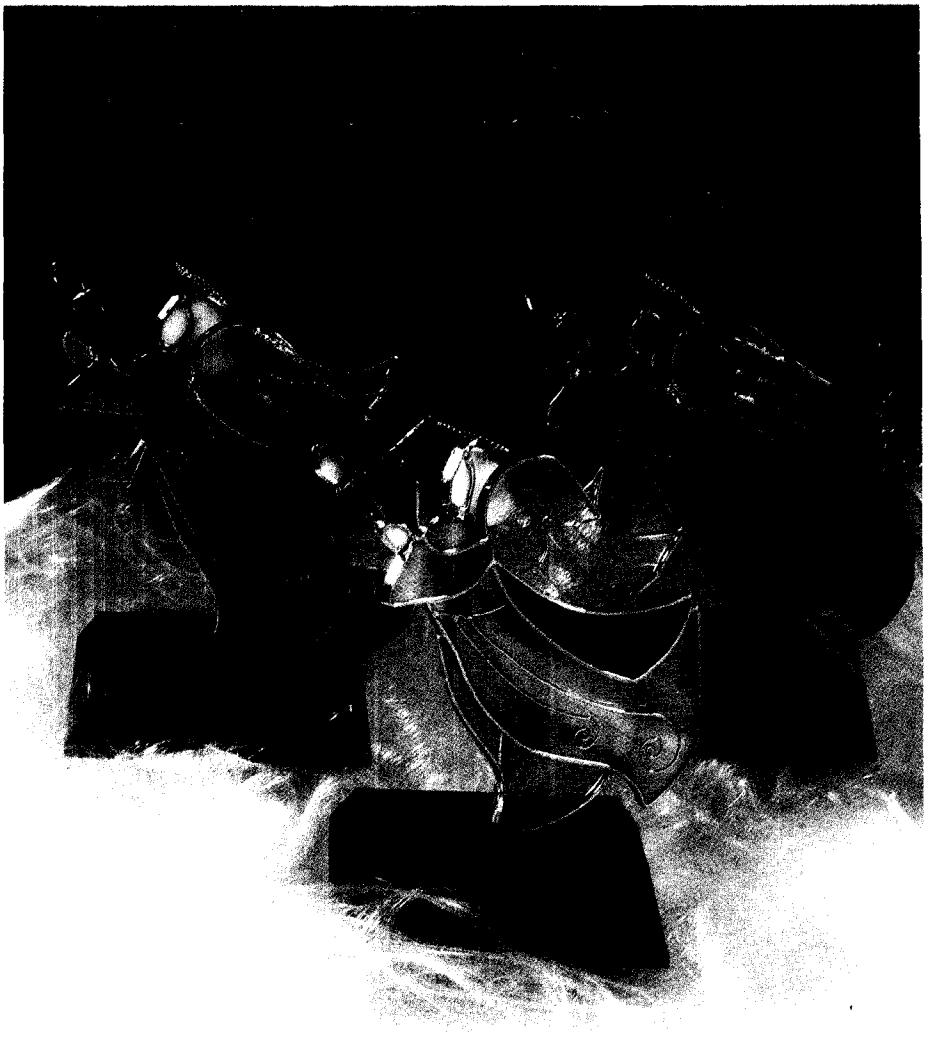

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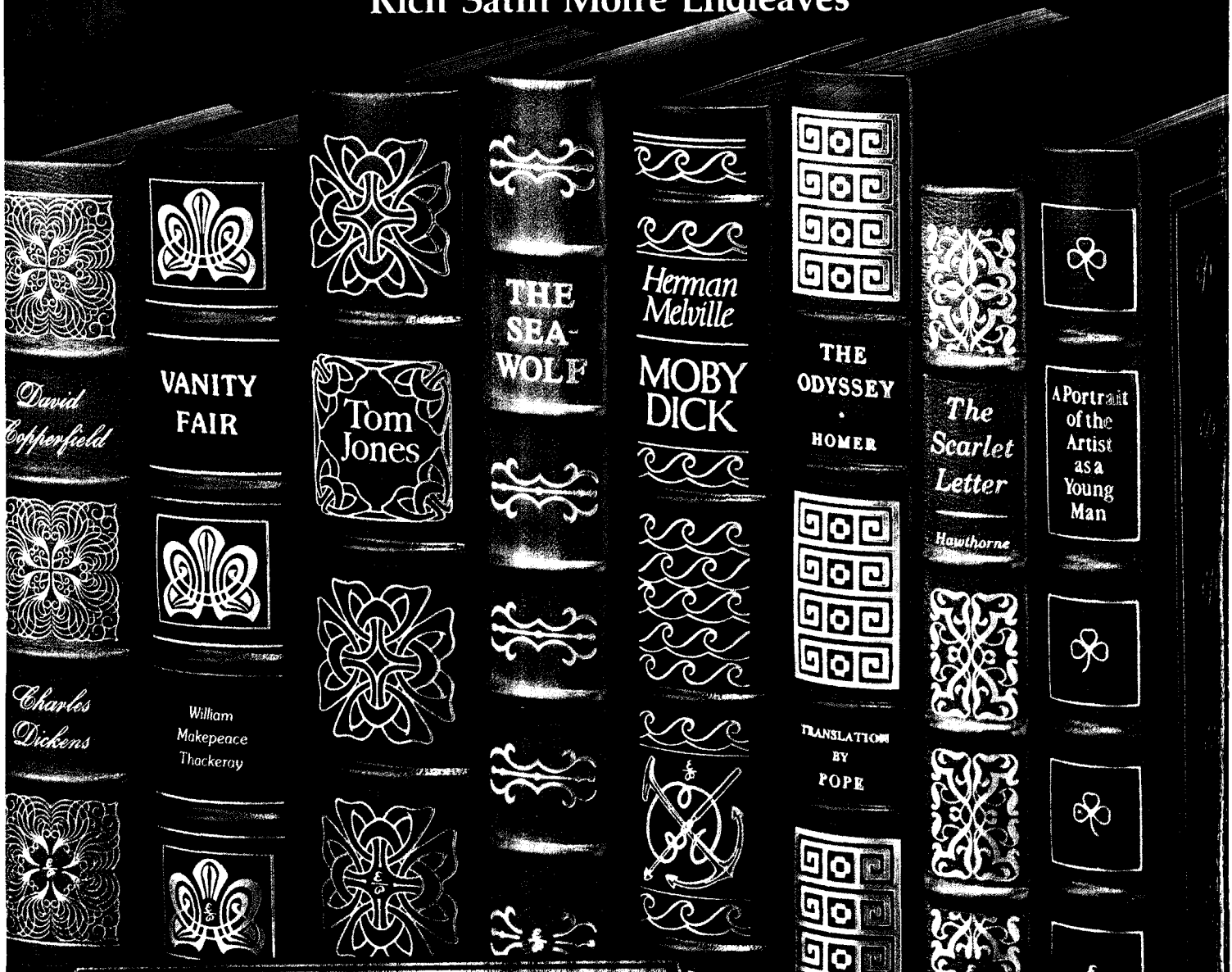

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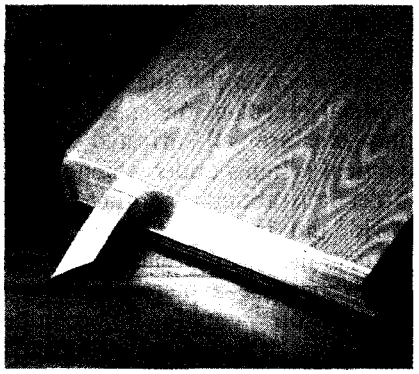

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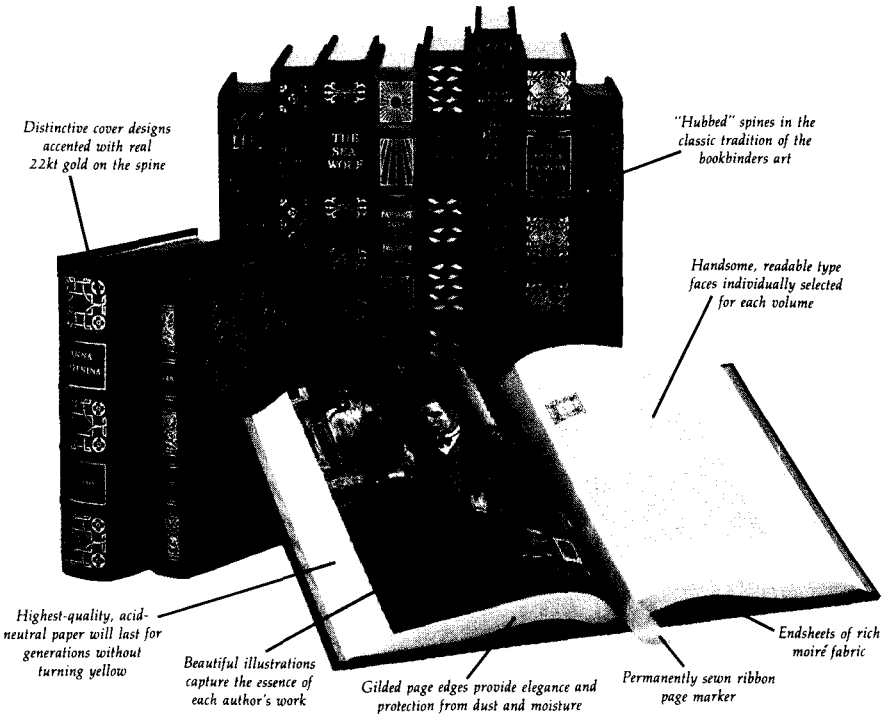
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Denise Stephenson and Joan MacIntosh in the American premiere of *Sore Throats*.

Small Scale, Large Scope

BY STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Howard Brenton's *Sore Throats*, the strongest play about sex and marriage since Pinter's *Old Times*, had its American premiere in April at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. I had seen its first production in 1979 at the Royal Shakespeare Company's smaller London theater, the Warehouse, and had been overwhelmed. Productions followed in Denmark and Australia and I waited impatiently for a production here, but in the intervening two years all that happened in this country was the publication of the play in the Spring 1981 issue of *Theater*, the magazine of the Yale School of Drama. Then, last December, *Sore Throats* was given a public reading by a professional cast at a SoHo cafe in New York. I went to that reading and was smitten again by the play's power. When the St. Louis production was announced, I hastened to see it. An exceptionally fine performance, in the Rep's Studio Theatre, convinced me yet again of the importance of Brenton's small-scale, large-scope play.

The title comes from Brecht:

> I have heard that lovemaking can give you a swollen throat. I don't want one. But the swing-boats [amusement park rides], I have heard, can give you a swollen throat, too. So I shan't be able to avoid it.

Yet Brecht, whose influence is marked in much of Brenton's work, is not his model here. *Sore Throats* is, as its subtitle says, "an intimate play," about the relations between a man and a woman. With only three characters and one simple set, it plunges into the remotest secrets that men and women try to keep from themselves, let alone one another. It grows directly from the line of venturous psycho-sexual plays that flourished in Europe in the nineteenth century and that was thrust into our century by Strindberg.

Sore Throats is thus an anomaly for Brenton. Most of his work has been fiercely political. Now 40, he is one of a coeval group of vigorously radical British playwrights that includes David Hare, the author of *Plenty*, with whom in fact Brenton once collaborated. He is the son of a policeman who, after twenty-five years in uniform, became a Methodist minister. Without neatly tagging Brenton genetically, one can see recurrent conflicts between force and spirit in his work. Many of his characters are policemen, including the man in *Sore Throats*, and he often uses the pressure of worldly authority in opposition to inner authority. One of his most recent plays, *The Romans in Britain*, done at the National in 1980, interweaves scenes of Caesar's invasion (uniforms and force again) with scenes of present-day Ulster troubles (inseparable from religious connotations). For the National, Brenton has also written new versions of Brecht's *Galileo* and Büchner's *Danton's Death*, two plays that center on the conflict between government and the individual will. *Sore Throats* is not such a play, not political except in the spacious sense that we are all affected by the political systems under which we live.

Yet it *is* about a conflict between world and spirit. I'll describe *Sore Throats* more fully than is usual in a review because a mere summary of the action could be uniquely misleading. Only a sampling of its texture can suggest the extraordinary

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quality of its characterization, structure, and vernacular imagery, and can show that beneath the language and the action, both of which are often brutal, is a drama of exquisite compassion.

The play is in two acts. Jack, a London policeman of 45, has lately divorced Judy, 39, to live with a younger woman. Seized with remorse when he left his wife, he had written her a letter giving her full title to their house. He has since had more sober, pragmatic thoughts on the matter; he wants half the money from the sale of the house to help him start a new life with his new girl. Now in Act I he has come, in uniform, to the flat that Judy has just rented, to get her signature on an agreement granting him half the proceeds from the house. Judy, sitting on the floor with the bottle of wine that is the flat's only furnishing, starts to speak of what she remembers when she sees him and of the failed sex between them, torments sparked by her imaginings about his sexual behavior with the new girl.

So, from the start, knives flash between Judy and Jack, as they slash at each other and even at themselves. What they cut loose are the demons that entangle love and sex with ego and money, that turn homes into smoldering battlefields. As those knives reveal, marriage may bring union but it also brings rivalries, along with stratagems to conceal the rivalries. Even a marriage begun in love entails constriction. Even a marriage begun in reason implies some expectation of male dominance, in the minds of women conditioned by centuries of dominance. Husbands, often the best of husbands, know of that expectation, resent it, then sometimes fulfill it; to a degree, they do so vindictively.

Money, the persistent nag of money needs, runs underneath all these rivalries and constrictions. Even before Judy learns why Jack has come, she fantasizes about what she will do with her windfall from the house, fantasies in which the money that she has "earned" by living with a man will bring her revenge on a man.

> I am thinking of using this money to have an operation. I would like bits of ferocious animals grafted onto me. Adders' heads for breasts? Nipples that suck, rather than get sucked? . . . A tiger's head for a womb? . . . Won't I be a nice surprise for middle-aged men, cruising in cars.

Jack, not naively and not slyly, still hopes for friendship between them. He has found some tenderness in life, and Judy's fantasies, her bitterness, touch him with concern: "You can't live on pain all the time." But he works around to what their marriage had become, why he had needed escape and a new woman, and how feeling had been deadened by the press of daily obligation:

> When all you want is a bit of tenderness . . . why, in marriage . . . do you end up talking about the insulation in the loft all the time? . . . In the last stages of my divorce, I had a bit of a fantasy. One night, driven mad by the mill of marriage and sex, I saw myself discovered by a fellow-officer, outside a Trustees Savings Bank, my trousers and my Y-fronts down . . . with my c--k jammed in a twenty-four-hour cash dispensing machine.

This terrible nightmare, an epitome of the inevitable grittiness underlying even the warmest impulses to marriage, brings him to a plaintive coda:

> . . . you've got to feel free. That you do things freely. Or one thing, the best thing. Love. Even if you're a policeman, you've got to feel that!

Jack moves to the point of his visit, the agreement about the money. Judy laughs. She says that he and the young woman can "live off each other." Then she cries. "Not for our marriage. I'm crying for me. Me! Me!" She recalls what *her* past was like, what the marriage had come to mean to her:

> You put me in that house. Or my mother put me in that house. Or I put me in that house. But put I was. . . . I sat alone in the living-room every morning, having my coffee. . . . Listening for something. But what? . . . There must be so many women in the city alone in rooms on afternoons. Listening, even beginning to count their own breaths.

Jack doesn't really hear her any more than she really hears him. In his mind is the vision that has brought him to her flat, "a big country. A lot of light." Canada, where he wants to go with his girl. Judy's refusal to sign the paper begins to drive him frantic. Then the drama of paradox bursts on him. Thinking of *tenderness*, of his new chance for tenderness, he hits Judy. In the mouth.

Contradictions continue to tear at him. With some wine dabbed on his handkerchief, he helps her wipe off the blood. Calmly, she remembers and recounts every time he hit her in their married life. She ends, pointedly, with the blow we have just seen. He knows what she is telling him. "For Jesus' sake," he says, "for some f--king sake, I'm in hell. Give me the money."

He punches her, and she falls. He takes out the legal paper. She starts to crawl away. He grabs her ankle. He kicks her in the stomach. Again. She is still refusing. He steps on her head.

All the while, remember, he is in uniform; all the while, he is a visible figure of order roweled with buried disorder.

> Is it the money? [He mutters:] Can't be money. Money can't make me boot in a woman lying on the floor, pissing in my pants the while, hating myself.

In pain, groggy, virtually prone, Judy signs the paper, ceding him half the money. "Woopee," says Jack. He leaves, weeping.

Silence for a moment, as she catches her breath; indeed, as we catch ours. What we have just seen is so naked, so ripped open, so disclosing of *our* possible buried connections to what we have just seen, that we need the moment—to sit and tremble.

After Judy has pulled herself upright, Sally, who is 23, comes into the flat. She is here in answer to Judy's advertisement for someone to share the place. The younger woman is sharp, experienced, alert; she quickly scents the trouble in the air. Soon she says, "You open a door, any door. And you find yourself in an abattoir."

Judy, stupefied into immediate confidence, responding to the mere presence of another woman, tells Sally what has just happened. Jack returns. He has left his penknife, with which, in their quarreling, he had taunted Judy to do herself injury. There's an altercation with this stranger, and Sally, angered by what she has already been told of him, hits him with her bag. A boil on the back of his neck bursts; he had been en route to a hospital to have it lanced. He faints with the pain. Judy finds the legal paper in his pocket. He recovers, dazed, sees the paper in Judy's hands, watches her tear it up. Growling a foul word at both the women, he staggers out. Judy and Sally are left with each other. Sally decides to stay and share.

Scorchingly eruptive, seemingly at the mercy of characters' outbursts, Act I is nonetheless consummately crafted. It achieves the optimum: it leaves us wanting to know what will happen with no idea of what that will be.

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If Act I resembles the Strindberg of scathing marital antagonisms, Act II, which takes place about a year later, is like the Strindberg of symbol and dream. The difference in tone between the two acts suggests cause and effect, launch and flight.

Act II opens in darkness. We hear Judy and Sally come in, sounding a bit drunk, giggling about the boy they expect to be waiting in the dark: thief and lover. At last the lights come on; no one else is there. The room is not really furnished, it is strewn—with cushions, lamps, unwashed dishes, empty bottles, trash. The bare stage of Act I, fitting for the starkness of what happened there, is now littered with the detritus of sloth and fantasy. Says Judy gleefully—defiantly?— "I wanted to get away from domesticity."

Sally soon begins what is almost a long aria, about the boy who might have been waiting for them there. Remembering the many boys who have been in the flat during the past year, she imagines the visitor in every detail; she finishes with a graphic description of how she and Judy will sexually drain this imaginary boy. That very description seems to expose the way they have been living, straining after pleasures, and she ends somewhat wearily, glimpsing futility. "Yes," she says, "it's very dodgy, the search for ecstasy. No wonder millions settle for a nice cup of tea."

Judy has withdrawn her remaining money from the bank, in cash. It's in a large plastic bag. Now she pours the banknotes on the floor. The two women, who have made a wild trip to America and have been flinging wildly with boys and men, actually have been trying to discover what their freedom amounts to, after one is free of marriage, the other free both from work and the usual dating game. Now, as the money begins to dwindle, they wonder what is ahead. Will Sally go back to her phone-answering job? Perhaps. She pictures it vividly. But Judy will not go back, not "to that front room. In the back of my mind, like a ghost, I am still there. Drinking coffee, listening to the rain drip in the hedge." She contemplates destroying the banknotes, as if to prevent her return to safe torpor. She even plays with the idea of stealing to live.

Into this mélange of dream and desperation, this muzzy liberty, steps Jack, out of the rain. In civilian clothes, with a well-covered infant's carrycot. "The door was open," he says apologetically. Judy stares silently. Sally utters an obscenity.

Jack puts down the carrycot carefully, fusses to make sure it's out of any draft, then begins to speak: quietly, piteously. He tells the story of the child's birth after a car accident in a remote part of the Canadian countryside, with no one but himself to assist his girlfriend. Balanced against Sally's aria about the frenetic quest for pleasure, Jack's aria is a testimony to change, to regeneration. As in the first act, Brenton gives the man an agony that accompanies the even greater agony that he has caused a woman: in this case, the childbirth after the accident.

At the finish, Jack admits that his girl later went off with another man. Judy, not much moved, mocks his paternal tone. She asks to see the baby. He refuses. A tussle. The carrycot goes flying across the room. A sudden freeze of horror. Sally turns over the carrycot—and takes out two bricks wrapped in blankets. "No baby," she says.

Jack says defenselessly, "The birth was real." His girl took the baby when she left. Now, for the first time, Judy is touched. "Jack, what are you doing stumbling around the London streets with a carrycot full of bricks?" He says that, since he couldn't have his daughter, he "nicked a few of her things." Bereft, broken, he wonders: "Why can't men have wombs, breasts, the works?" Sally replies, "Want the whole world, do you, mister?"

He wants *something*—from Judy. Embarrassed, he whispers in her ear. She is hushed by what he says; then she repeats it to Sally. "He says he wants to come between my breasts." It is Peer Gynt returned, from his long wanderings, to Solveig—"My mother! My wife! . . . O hide me in your love!"—except that this present-day Peer wants the mother-wife in more than poetic phrase.

Still somewhat hushed by the frankness of Jack's appeal, by his condition, all Judy can do is suggest a cup of tea, at which they all laugh. Then she recovers and starts tearing up the banknotes. Her action parallels the tearing of the agreement at the end of Act I, the agreement that would have taken away half of that money.

Jack begs for just a few pounds. She keeps tearing. Sally asks, laughing, "What are you going to do? Work?"

Judy strikes a match. She says, "I am going to be f--ked, happy, and free." She looks from the match to the money. Blackout.

That last line, blunt though it is, expresses an almost Athenian ideal. The whole play surges forward, through its wrenchings and fantasies and disappointments, with that ideal implicit until, at the last, it is spoken. The play ends with a question fixed by that ideal, fixed for us as it is for these people: After we see the chasm between that ideal and the probabilities, how do we live our lives with "tenderness," with decency toward ourselves and toward others? Brenton's art gives the only possible answer: it clarifies the question, powerfully.

The whole production in St. Louis surged toward that last line. The director, a young woman named Jan Eliasberg, understood the play well: she perceived it as the modern quintessence, sometimes vulgar and violent, of deep, old, prototypical agonies. In fire and flow, Eliasberg shaped the performance beautifully.

Joan MacIntosh, who has grown and grown through a career in off-Broadway and regional theater, made Judy a near-titanic figure, magnificent in anger, enthralling in despair. The English-born Denise Stephenson, pert and true and quick, was perfect as Sally. Stephenson crystallized the seeming *(seeming)* nonchalance of Sally's generation that sees the snares in marriage but sees no good alternatives. David Little, if not quite rightly cast as Jack, is a gifted and honest actor who created the essentials: the agony in Act I that keeps the conflict from being sheer brutality about a man who kicks his wife into signing an agreement; the desolation in Act II that completes Jack's pilgrimage.

In that small basement theater-in-the-round, Eliasberg and her actors realized the play as a rite of revelation. Congratulations to The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis for giving Brenton's play its first American life. For me, this production confirmed that *Sore Throats* is a candidate for greatness. ■

Stanley Kauffmann is an SR contributing editor.

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City of Mystery

Its castles, cathedrals, museums, Mystery Plays, and writers' birthplaces make York a highlight for the visitor to Great Britain.

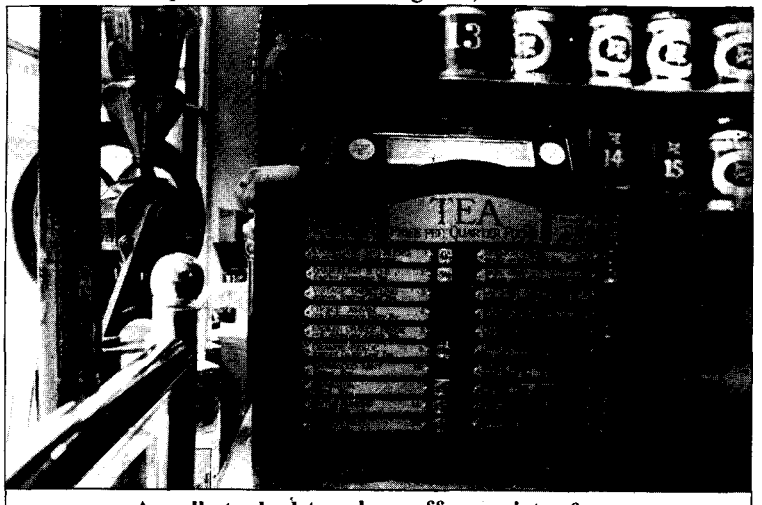
BY LANDT DENNIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISL DENNIS

York, England, is like trifle. Full of wonderful surprises, this ancient city satisfies the most demanding appetite for beauty and delights those who feast on history. Encircled by a medieval wall, York has narrow lanes and alleyways lined with the architecture of Roman, Elizabethan, Tudor, Gothic, and Georgian times.

Rich farmland, lonely dales, abandoned abbeys, stately homes, and dry-stone walls characterize the surrounding countryside. The ghosts of Hadrian, Erik Bloodaxe the Viking, William the Conqueror, Guy Fawkes, and Dick Turpin clamor for star billing among the scores of characters who have played important roles in the city's dramatic evolution.

Located halfway between London and Edinburgh, York was one of England's major railway centers in the nineteenth century. Stepping off one of the many trains which still connect it with the capital, I was immediately enthralled by the railway station. Its Victorian design and the exposed, rounded, steel girders make it as aesthetically compelling as a painting by Monet of the Gare St. Lazare.

Later, evensong in the Minster, England's largest Gothic cathedral, lifted me to another level of appreciation. In stalls behind the male choir, the congregation kneels, stands, and prays on a site that dates back to the ancient *principia*. In York, headquarters of Roman legions, Constantine was proclaimed emperor in 306 A.D. "The history of York is the history of England," said George VI, and nowhere is this more apparent than among the towering columns and the stained glass windows of the second-largest cathedral in Europe.



A well-stocked tea shop offers quiet refuge.

One of the Minster guides explained King George's comment: "After the Romans left, the city became the capital of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria, whose King Edwin was baptized into the Christian faith. In the ninth century the Vikings arrived. They named the city Jorvic. (Archaeological discoveries are fast turning York into a sort of Viking Pompeii.) Then in the eleventh century the Normans came. It was Walter de Gray, archbishop from 1216 to 1255, who began the cathedral you see today."

The Minster library, noted for its illuminated manuscripts, has contributed much to York's traditional standing as a center for book printing and collecting. Begun in 750 A.D., burned by the Vikings, again destroyed by the Normans, the library now has a collection of 80,000 volumes that was started in the fifteenth century. "It is the rooster recording Guy Fawkes' baptism in York that attracts most of our visitors," the librarian said. "We tried putting it away, but we had to keep bringing it out to show people. So, we now keep it on permanent display."

The York Mystery Plays are another of the city's legacies no longer kept under wraps. Said Eileen White, a medieval scholar and lecturer on the plays: "Records show that the Mystery Plays were performed from the fourteenth until the sixteenth century on Corpus Christi day. They began around 5 a.m. and continued until sunset. There were forty-eight wagons, or 'pageants,' some three-tiered, which were pulled through the streets. The mayor and corporation of York were responsible for overseeing the annual production; the guilds, for the fitting out of the wagons and the acting of the individual plays."

As the plays were dedicated to the

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reenactment of the entire Bible, from Creation to Judgment Day, each guild was assigned a portion of the Old or the New Testament. The medieval matchmaking was precise. Shipwrights performed Noah and the Ark, goldsmiths put on the Three Kings, while the Crucifixion fell to the butchers. "The plays were meant to arouse the people spiritually, but they were also intended to give glory to the city of York," Ms. White explained. "So much so, the mayor could fine a guild for a defective pageant or bad acting."

From bleachers at twelve viewing points at the city's crossroads, spectators would come and go, rarely sitting through a whole day's worth of Bible history. There was nothing solemn about their attitude. The play everyone wanted to see, though, was the Last Judgment. Performed by the Merchants Guild, its props, according to records, included "two devils' coats, two devils' heads, Hell Mount, a number of angels . . . and pieces of rainbow."

Viewed over the years by Kings Richard II, Richard III, and Henry VIII, the Mystery Plays have been condensed to three hours daily and have become a part of the York Festival, scheduled for June 8 to July 2, 1984. "As in the Middle Ages, all parts are performed by local amateurs, with one exception. Jesus is played by a professional," said Delma Tomlin, festival coordinator.

For those wise enough to have reserved rooms months ahead, Judges Lodging is discreetly tucked away on Lendal Street. The eighteenth-century townhouse was built by a York physician, which explains the stone head of Aesculapius over the enormous Georgian front door. Later, the house became the official residence of the Assize Court judges. Four-poster beds, antiques, views of the Minster, and a silver pot of coffee delivered to your room every morning make Judges Lodging an ideal base from which to explore York's intriguing landmarks.

"Gravediggers, not knowing who he was, took his body to Cambridge where it was used for an anatomy lecture. Sterne was recognized, though, and his body returned to London."

York's sixteen medieval churches, many of which are used for chamber music concerts during the festival, are worth viewing, and those interested in locomotives will revel in the Railroad Museum, where Queen Victoria's private car is on view.

The Castle Museum gives this city an added dimension. It is the brainchild of a country doctor, John Kirk, who frequently exchanged his services for "bygones." In 1935, York turned over to the doctor its monumental Female Prison and later its Debtors Prison, adjacent and architecturally magnificent eighteenth-century buildings. Citizens watched in fascination as Dr. Kirk put together a folk museum. Tools, farm machinery, clothing, sign posts, and toys are all here. So are ration books and World War II instruction manuals by "Mrs. Sew-and-Sew" on mending shirts and dresses. Also included are nineteenth-century pewter maces carried by members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, an Edwardian bathroom, and a 1950s living room complete with TV, antimacassars, and linoleum floor. A reconstruction of turn-of-the-century Kirkgate features streets lined with Victorian storefronts straight from the pages of Dickens.

Castle Howard, thirty minutes outside York, is familiar to viewers of the television series *Brideshead Revisited.* Rising out of the early morning fog, the dome, columns, arches, and pediments floated in midair as I gazed past a flock of geese to Vanbrugh's eighteenth-century masterpiece. Horace Walpole wrote in his diary the day he fell under the building's spell: "Nobody informed me that at one view I should see a palace, woods worthy of being a metropolis of the Druids, the noblest lawn in the world fenced by half the horizon, and a mausoleum that would tempt one to be buried alive; in short, I have seen gigantic palaces before, but never a sublime one."

Outside the enormous Palladian windows, a half-dozen peacocks fanned their tails and strutted along miles of carved stone balustrades. On patrol in the 1,000-acre park, the fountains and vistas of which make it one of England's grandest examples of eighteenth-century landscape architecture, the birds shrieked directions to visitors: "Left to the Temple. Right to the Pyramid."

A Yorkshire itinerary should also include a visit to Harewood, residence of the Earl of Harewood and designed by John Carr and Robert Adams; Fountains Abbey, whose ruins of a Cistercian monastery are incorporated into one of the country's best ornamental gardens; and the parsonage in Haworth, home of Charlotte, Emily Jane, and Anne Brontë and their debauched brother, Branwell.

Nearby, the village of Coxwold, one of the best-preserved feudal villages in Yorkshire, is the destination of *Tristram Shandy* fans. After knocking on the door of Shandy Hall I was shown in by Kenneth Monk-

TRAVEL FACTS: TWA flies to England from all major U.S. airports. . . . Two hours from London on the Edinburgh line, York is served hourly by train (Britrail, 630 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, [212] 599-5416). . . . The Mt. Royal, Post House, Royal Station, and Viking are among the leading hotels. . . . For tea and scones, it's a tossup among Betty's, Taylor, the Kiosk, and Crumble's. . . . Reservations for dinner are advisable at the Grapevine, Mt. Royal, Judges Lodging, and the Chandelier. . . . Free walking tours of the city leave at 10:15 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. outside the Art Gallery in Exhibition Square, Easter through October. . . . The brochure on the York Festival and Mystery Plays 1984 (office at 1 Museum Street, York Y01 2DT) will be out in October. Tickets, on a first-come, first-served basis, begin to be mailed in March 1984. . . . For more information contact the York Tourist Office (care of De Gray House, Exhibition Square, York Y01 2HB) and the British Tourist Authority (680 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019, [212] 581-4700).

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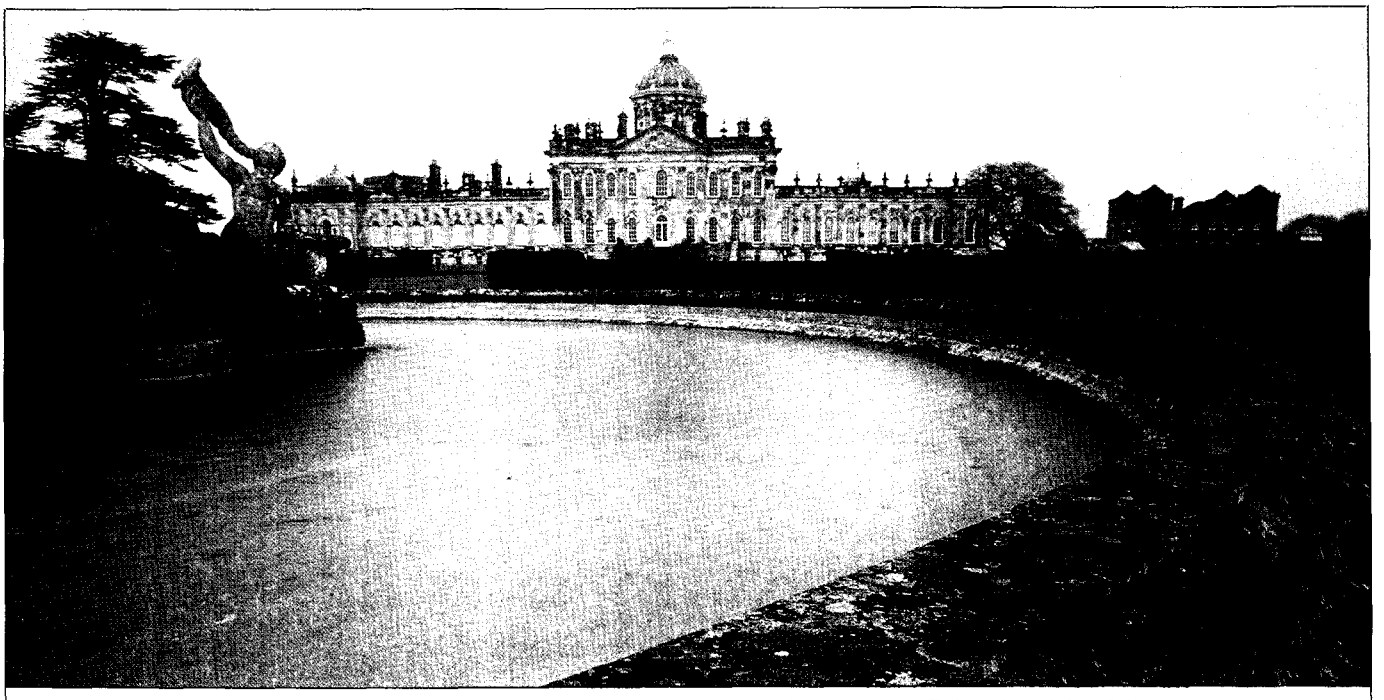
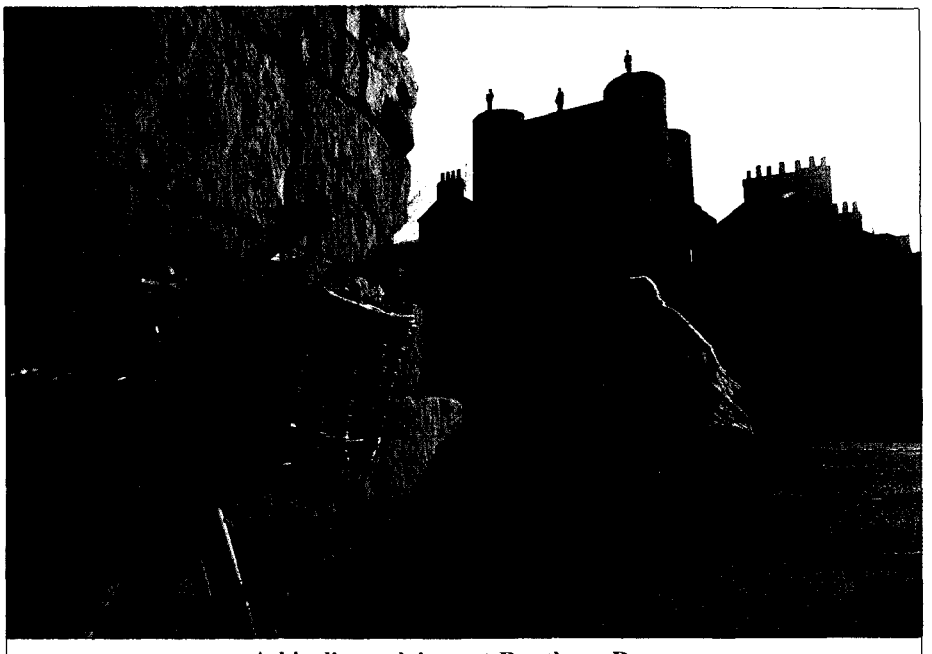


Castle Howard is familiar to viewers of the television series *Brideshead Revisited.*



A bicylist pedals past Bootham Bar.

man. A former news commentator, he has the world's largest private book collection pertaining to Laurence Sterne. Monkman and his wife, Julia, are also responsible for maintaining Sterne's beloved parish house, in which he wrote what many consider to be the first psychological novel.

"It was in this small library that Sterne worked," Monkman said, standing in a room no larger than six by eight feet, lined with rare books. "Sterne, his wife, and daughter loved living here. He'd go across the street to deliver his sermons," he said, pointing out the window to St. Michael's Church. "He's buried there. At least, we think so. It was really old Nollekens, the sculptor, who was responsible" for Sterne's burial in Coxwold, Monkman continued, resting his hand on a white marble bust of Sterne.

Sterne, who occasionally preached in the York Minster, died and first was buried in London. "Gravediggers, not knowing who he was, took his body to Cambridge where it was used for an anatomy lecture. Sterne was recognized, though, and his body returned to London," Monkman said. "In 1969 the burial ground was sold for development. So, Sterne was up for reburial. I went down and spotted a skeleton whose skull had been sawed in half. It was obviously as far as the anatomy professor had gotten. But to confirm it was really Sterne, I hurried home to measure Nollekens' bust of him. The sculpted head and the skull were exactly the same, including a protrusion which accounted for Sterne's slightly bucked teeth."

The Monkmans include another famous Yorkshire author in their circle. "Alf Wight, known to his readers as James Herriot, is very much alive and still working as a vet here," Julia Monkman said. Curled up in her lap was Foley, a 13-year-old cat which the famous chronicler of Yorkshire country life had nursed after it was hit by a car. "He has set aside Friday afternoons at his clinic in Thirsk to see readers of his books. The rest of the week, he is still totally committed to his animals."

For Sterne, Yorkshire was "a delicious retreat . . . so sweetly does everything about it invite your mind to rest from its Labours, and be at peace with itself and the world!" For Herriot, to tramp through Swinnergill and over Melbecks Moor to Gunnerside Gill has been "to find myself in a wonderland . . . it is up there on the empty moors with the curlew crying that I have been able to find peace and tranquility of mind." ■

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Brooks' Bookshop

Through his film company, Brooksfilms, and such movies as "The Elephant Man" and "Frances," Mel Brooks reveals the serious side of the man best known for his zany comedy "Blazing Saddles."

BY MARC KRISTAL

For a major corporation, Twentieth Century Fox, nestled among the condominiums of Century City, evinces considerable whimsy. A "Gay Nineties New York" set, built during the 1960s for the filming of *Hello Dolly*, adorns the studio's main entrance, giving it the appearance of a theme park. In the elevator of the faded pink Executive Building a small sign promises that "there is little danger of running out of air or of the car dropping uncontrollably." In room 377 is Mel Brooks who, seated at the far end of his elegant, oversized office, begins the interview by barking "Test! Test!" into the tape recorder, then promises "to try to act like a serious Jewish person."

Brooks' kidding gives as incomplete a picture of him as does the frilly Fox facade. Of the Mel Brooks known to the general public, three things are certain: his most successful comedies, which include *Blazing Saddles* and *Young Frankenstein*, are the epitome of "popular art"—usually irreverent, frequently vulgar, and never subtle; he is one of Hollywood's most evident "hyphenates" (writer-producer-director-star); and, as his friend and one-time collaborator Carl Reiner puts it, "Mel lives loud." Much of this noise is devoted to self-advertisement. But Brooks says, "My best friends know me as a more critical and complicated person." This serious side is expressed through his company, Brooksfilms. The contrast between Brooks and Brooksfilms is so striking as to seem deliberate. Of the four films bearing the company name to date, only one, *My Favorite Year*, is a comedy; *Fatso* is at best bittersweet; *Frances* and *The Elephant Man* are disturbing dramas. Brooks did not write, produce, direct, or appear in any of them; all four, in fact, were guided by directors making their major motion picture debuts. First-timers were also involved in such capacities as writing and producing. Glaring in its absence from the credits is the name Mel Brooks. What appears is only "Brooksfilms."

Brooks has no intention of abandoning comedy. Yet he says, as he inflates with his hyperbolic, mock-pompous style, "I need to describe things of a more exquisite and subtle nature. And Brooksfilms is a wonderful vehicle for me to convey my own more muted and complicated passions." In fact, the company represents the fulfillment of deeply felt needs and old desires. Gene Wilder, a friend since the middle 1960s, recalls that "Mel once said what he really wanted to do the most was to own a bookshop. He couldn't think of any better life than to sit with friends and passersby, and talk about Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, and sip tea. Through Brooksfilms, he has opened up his bookshop."

Bristling with the energy, confidence, ambition, and utter immodesty that typify him, Brooks says, "If you see 'Brooksfilms' on that screen, the *worst* it can be is a very good picture. What we *hope* is that it will be a classic." The company, like the man, is small and efficient, featuring a pared-down permanent staff and the participation of Brooks' lawyer, accountant, and a loyal group of creative people. The aim is a limited number of what Ingmar Bergman, in reference to his own work, calls "handmade" films. To achieve this end, some standard industry attitudes and practices have been jettisoned.

His company's independence enables Brooks, a restless, impulsive man, to quickly approve or reject any project himself, eliminating the interminable, and often terminal, decision-by-committee process upon which studios rely. *The Elephant Man* became a Brooksfilms project when Brooks, seeking to fill an idle hour, read a copy of the script which had been left in his office. By page thirty, he was sold. For Jonathan Sanger, who had taken an option on *The Elephant Man* in the hope of making it his producing debut, "it was the best news I had ever imagined." Sanger says, "It would have been very difficult to get a studio to agree to all the difficult things about the project. Mel said, 'With me, you'll be able to do it your way, and it's something I would be proud to be involved with'."

Brooksfilms is distinguished by this willingness to take risks. *The*

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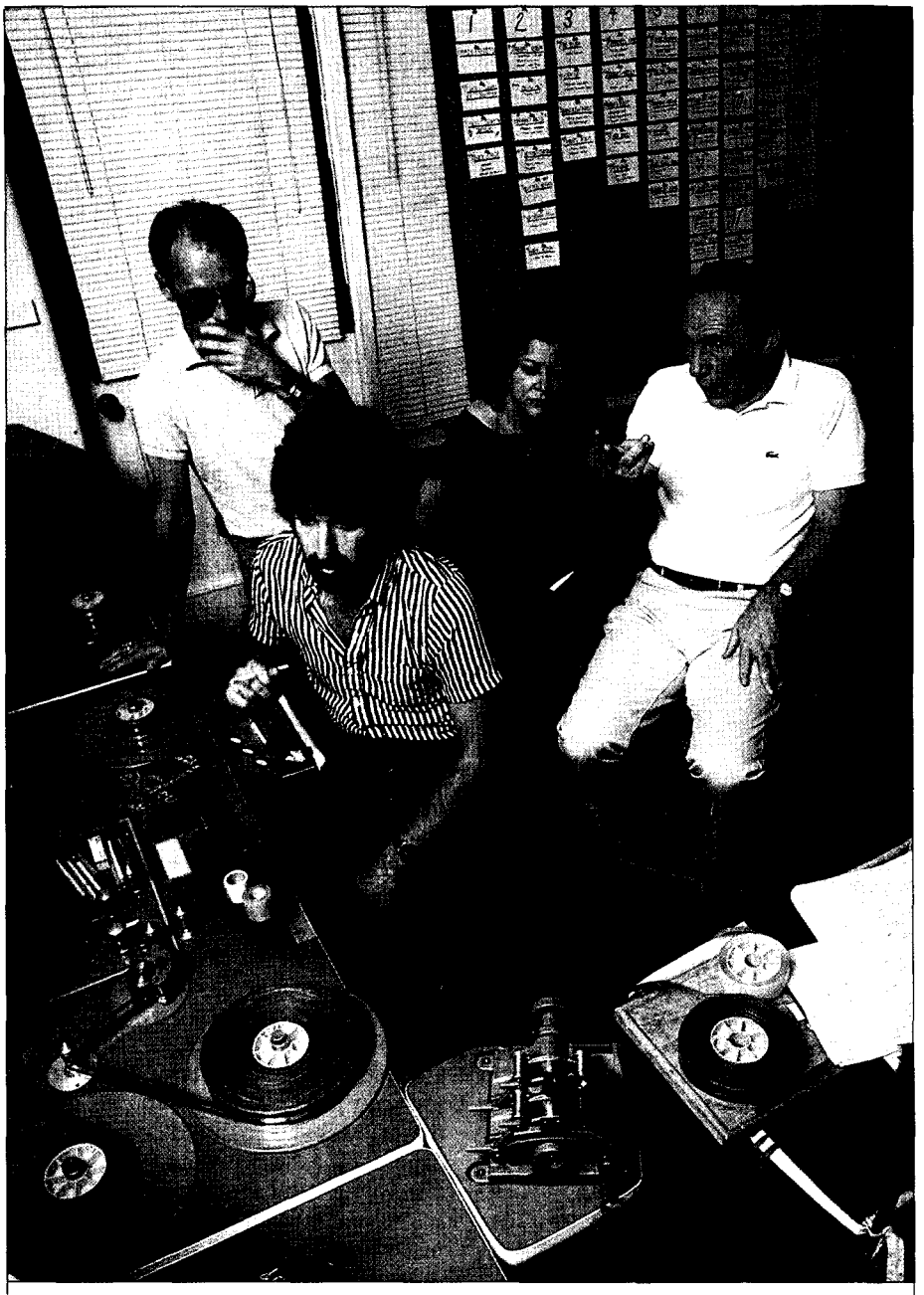
Elephant Man had been rejected by most of the major film companies before Brooks read it. Says Eric Bergren, co-author of the script, "Nobody really wanted to do a movie about the ugliest man in the world." The same was true of *Frances,* the relentlessly grim story of actress Frances Farmer. "If it hadn't been for Mel," says its director, Graeme Clifford, "the picture wouldn't have been made." Neither had apparent commercial potential, but Brooks didn't care; he is not in business "just to be in business," as he says. He undertook the projects, both biographies, because he was moved by them and believed audiences would be. Brooks feels that such pictures, by their expression of human triumph and endurance, perform "a true service." He is perhaps the only motion picture executive in Hollywood—in the world?—who would justify a $5 million expenditure by saying, "Maybe it's part of the whole Jewish thing—'I pledge two dollars anonymous for the crippled children.' It makes you feel good when you do something like that."

Equally unusual, in an industry that puts a premium on the known quantity, is Brooks' willingness to gamble on newcomers. His motivation stems from his own past difficulty in establishing himself as a director. The company's track record with new people is startling. Brooksfilms' first-time directors have included Anne Bancroft *(Fatso)*, who is Brooks' wife, Richard Benjamin *(My Favorite Year),* Graeme Clifford *(Frances)*, and David Lynch *(The Elephant Man);* producer Jonathan Sanger and writers Eric Bergren and Christopher DeVore debuted with *The Elephant Man* and continued with *Frances.* Most of this "young talent," of course, possessed impressive resumes. Decisions that seem risky have been, in fact, matters of good judgment and faith, both rare qualities in the movie business.

Brooksfilms combines its patronage with a supportive working environment. "Mel gives me more latitude than anyone I've ever worked with," says Sanger, who speculates that, had *The Elephant Man* been studio-made, Lynch's methods would not have been comprehensible or acceptable to the brass. Brooks took particular pains with his young writers. "He always went out of his way to make us feel confident," Bergren recalls, "and made it very clear to us not to sell ourselves short." Not that he and DeVore were spared the truth about their work. He says, "We were afforded the chance to be wrong. A lot of people get fired the first time they make a mistake, because the producers get very scared. But Mel always gives you the opportunity to learn."



TOM KASSER

Like the man, Brooksfilms is small and efficient; the aim is a limited number of "handmade" films.

Brooks also encourages his people to take chances. Before shooting began on *The Elephant Man,* Brooks told Lynch of a conversation with Warner Brothers executive John Calley during the making of *Blazing Saddles*. Brooks had said to Calley, "Is that scene too macabre? Am I being too frivolous?" Calley replied, "Mel, if you're going to go up to the bell, then *ring it*." So Brooks' instructions to Lynch were: "Go to the limits of your vision. Otherwise, you're not being true to yourself."

One must remember that Brooks would have had far less control of the making of *The Elephant Man* had he hired someone more experienced to direct it. Veteran filmmakers, as Carl Reiner points out, "have difficulty catering to or accepting outside influences and suggestions." He adds, "Mel's very needful of things being done his way." But Brooks, an astute judge of talent, finds excellent people

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to send his message, and he does not dominate them. "I'm incredibly stimulated in a room with him," says Richard Benjamin. "And I begin to perform better, and think faster, and come up with better stuff."

As Brooksfilms' executive producer, Brooks combines ceaseless energy, comprehensive creative knowledge, an unstinting devotion to hard work, and what his attorney Alan Schwartz describes as a "concentrated, very intense intelligence." He is demanding of employees and coworkers. "Mel believes that the difference between most folks and artists is that folks work until it's time to quit, and artists don't quit until they get it right," DeVore says. With the exception of the actual shooting, which he takes pains to avoid, Brooks involves himself in most aspects of the picture-making process, including editing and casting. His comprehension of film language—his ability to accurately translate ideas and emotions into images—makes him an effective critic at each stage of the game.

Brooks' most active role, owing perhaps to his strong literary bent, is that of script supervisor. "There's nothing more important than the word," he says. "A good script is a raft you can float a lot of disaster on. A poor script, even with the greatest stars and the most money, will sink in a minute." Though uncredited, he had substantial input into the writing of *The Elephant Man*, creating a new dramatic structure from the overlong first draft. He says he has worked "long, hard, and diligently" on the company's other scripts as well.

Ironically, Brooks' principal contribution to Brooksfilms is rooted not in art but commerce. What Graeme Clifford describes as "his rather awe-inspiring track record" commands respect and attention from distributors, studios, and exhibitors. Nor does Brooks, generally viewed as fearless, balk if getting his way requires a fight. "There were lots of little instances when he stood up for me," says Clifford. "You don't usually find that sort of loyalty in someone in his position, because it can get him into compromising situations." His humor has helped to diffuse tension. Benjamin says, "When he's on a 'Mel mission,' he uses one of his greatest tools, his ability as a performer. To get things done [in Hollywood] is hard. But it's very hard to say no to Mel."

Of all his business abilities, one clearly pleases Brooks the most: "I tell you," he states with Churchillian confidence, "I'm a better salesman than I am anything else. I should have worked on Allen street, on the Lower East Side, selling dark blue suits to Jews who didn't need them. I can dazzle people with the right set of lies." The stellar example of this is the way Brooks raised $4 million for *The Elephant Man* by a sale to NBC. The network purchased the television rights, says Sanger, "for a picture that was in black-and-white, about a deformed man, starring John Hurt, and that was all we had."

Financially as well as artistically, *The Elephant Man* seems the quintessential Brooksfilms effort: it was inexpensively produced, independently funded, had advantageous domestic- and foreign-distribution deals, was a critical success, and returned $70 million worldwide on an investment of $5 million. "These are not altruistic ventures," Brooks says. "I think there's a lot of money in art, and my goal for Brooksfilms is that it be self-funded." It would require a string of films as successful as *The Elephant Man* for that to happen. Of the other company projects, *Fatso* barely broke even, and *Frances* and *My Favorite Year* show no signs of becoming blockbusters. Brooks' approach, which combines high creative standards with rigid cost control and limited outside participation, worked very well once. Whether or not it will click often enough to float so expensive an enterprise as a film company, time will tell.

The question remains: Why, given the apparent pride he takes in *The Elephant Man* and *Frances*, did Brooks not put his name on them? A part of the reason is practical: "It would be confusion," he explains. "You put the name Mel Brooks on something, the public expects a riotous comedy, and they end up with something that has cellos and violins in it." Brooks understandably has no wish to disappoint the hard-won audience that has made him rich. While this might seem to show little faith in the public's intelligence, Sanger raises the case of Woody Allen, whose films "have done less well the more serious he gets." Instead of undertaking the uncertain task of reeducating his audience, "Mel has separated that aspect of his life and said, 'The serious statements I can make through Brooksfilms, and still continue to fulfill the public's expectations'."

This unwillingness to risk mass displeasure may be a result of Brooks' past creative and financial difficulties. His early success in television, as a $5,000-per-week writer for Sid Caesar's *Your Show of Shows,* has been well documented, and his string of hits, beginning with *Blazing Saddles* (1974), is familiar to most moviegoers. Between 1959 and his successful third film, however, only two Brooks projects did well at all: the four "Two-Thousand-Year-Old-Man" albums improvised with Carl Reiner, and *Get Smart*, the TV series he created with Buck Henry. When lawyer Schwartz met him in 1962, "Mel had just written a play called *All-American*, which was a disaster. He had no money—zero. He was getting a divorce. He had three kids. And he would come to my office in New York with a cup of tea and a walnut-and-cheese sandwich from Chock Full o' Nuts and"—this with an ironic, slightly amazed chuckle—"talk about the future. Our law firm carried him for a long time; he couldn't pay his bills." At the time he made *The Producers*, "he still wasn't making any money," despite the success of *Get Smart*.

Brooks' frustrations also concerned his creativity. Gene Wilder, who first met him in those years, recalls that "he'd be up till 3 or 4 in the morning, foaming over—up to the brim and beyond. He was gushing with passion and impatience; he had so many ideas he wanted to put on paper and on film."

Many of Brooks' plans had little to do with making people laugh. Clifford says of him: "Mel is a very perceptive, thoughtful, sensitive, private man. The comedic aspect of his personality is just the public face. Behind that is a totally different individual." To some degree, this is evident in his film comedies. Brooks describes his first film as a writer-director, *The Producers*, as being about "the ego and the id, and launching oneself toward glory"; much of its humor derives from a satire of Nazism. *Blazing Saddles* dealt with racial hatred, albeit hilariously. And Brooks claims to

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have been motivated to make *History of the World, Part I* by the inequity at Versailles. As a young man, however, Brooks hoped to express his concerns through the medium he loved best, literature. "Mel's fantasy of success, believe it or not, was to write the Great Russian Novel," says Reiner. "He was a collector of rare books, and he read an awful lot; Gogol and Dostoyevsky were his gods."

Brooks came closest to unifying his comic gifts and artistic yearnings with *The Twelve Chairs* (1970), his second film. Adapted from a novel by the Russian satirists Ilf and Petrov, the work's bittersweet nature is manifest in its theme song, "Hope for the Best, Expect the Worst." Its almost complete failure was particulary painful, Wilder thinks, "because Mel wanted it to be so much more than it was perceived as." The experience may have contributed to Brooks' present preference for issuing his "serious statements" from behind Brooksfilms' shield of anonymity. "I think he got stung," Wilder says, "and withdrew back into what he knows better than anyone else in the world."

The company also enables Brooks to receive the kind of critical regard—and, by extension, the recognition as an intellectual—denied him for his comedies. Brooks is extremely conscious of how he is perceived. To further explain the absence of his name from Brooksfilms' dramas he says, "I knew the critics would take offense if there was a property they felt was sacred and the bean-farting wacko from *Blazing Saddles* was going to put his grimy paws on it." Indeed, nowhere is his ambivalence more apparent than in his remarks about critics, which show both hatred for what they have done to him and a desire to win their regard.

Brooks has a strong desire to receive acknowledgment from respectable quarters; this perhaps is inevitable in someone of Brooks' generation and background. Schwartz characterizes him as "a street kid," Brooklyn-born and ghetto-bred, "with a 'little Jew' mentality about the way the big WASP world feels about him." Schwartz says, "Here's a guy with very little education and sophistication who's become a wine expert"—though, as Wilder points out, he was a devotee of Pepsi several years ago. In his mind, respect and understanding depend upon the proper facade. Explaining the evolution of *The Producers* from novel to play to film, Brooks says, "I didn't want to write a movie, because I thought they were classless. I thought the best thing you could be was an off-Broadway playwright; Broadway was already too crass and commercial, and I wanted to be Samuel Beckett at parties." While Brooks understands, says Sanger, "that successful comedy is about the hardest thing you can do, he does also recognize that, critically, comedies tend to get less acclaim because they're not thought of as being important." Thus *The Elephant Man* has gotten him something that *Blazing Saddles* never did.

Brooks is not the sort to brood, or to quit. In his hardest years, says Schwartz, "Mel was surprisingly resilient. My impression was that he felt rejected, but expected that"; a strong part of his childhood legacy is "a very realistic view of the way the world behaves." At bottom, Brooksfilms is a creative solution to a dilemma that is both artistic and personal. "Ninety percent of the reviews on *The Producers*," Brooks says, "called it disgusting, horrible, stupid, inept, etc. And if I took those reviews to heart, I never would have made another movie. So a good lesson is, when the critics sit you on their shoulders and say you're the greatest thing since cranberry juice, take it with a grain of salt; and when they crush you, go somewhere, suffer your pain in your little dark emotional cave, come out, and work again."

Brooksfilms, at present, has several projects in various stages of development, including an adaptation of Toni Morrison's novel *Tar Baby*, to star Howard Rollins, Jr.; a comic reworking of the Robin Hood saga; and *Solar Babies*, which Sanger calls "a cross between *E.T.* and *The Road Warrior*." Brooks is also negotiating with South African playwright Athol Fugard to write an epic film about apartheid. "Brooksfilms is open for business," he says. "Any time we see a flag about the human condition that appeals to us, we're going to see if we can't surround it with the right help and nourishment."

All the company's films to date, dramas and comedies alike, have in common central figures who are misunderstood, and to some extent brutalized, by the societies in which they live. Yet, they endure and ultimately triumph. If Brooks has a theme, it is this. "One of the purposes of art," he says, his voice for once natural, "is to make things right that are eternally wrong. And the job of the artist is to paint a picture of life as truly and honestly as he sees it, and add that extra dimension of hope, and of fantasy, and of dream."

In life as in his movies, Brooks has a penchant for the underdog, for righting wrongs: "People he doesn't have to be nice to, he goes out of his way to be nice to," Schwartz says. Brooks does not so much hire people as take them under his wing; he advises them, and often bullies them. "He gives people what he thinks they need," Reiner says, "even if they don't want it." Brooksfilms is without question his second family.

"The back side," says Brooks, "is that I'm a pretty spiteful, mean, sometimes stupid, insulting, angry man." Yet virtually all of those who have been involved with Brooksfilms would readily work there again. The reason is simple. Says Reiner: "Mel is quick to anger, quick to judge, he's volatile, he's a pain in the ass—he's all things." But most of all, "he's a very, very nourishing human being." A story told by Bergren and DeVore captures the particular nature of his generosity. Once, before the filming of *The Producers* had begun, producer Sidney Glazier had treated Brooks to a weekend in London. The fledgling director had been installed in a four-star hotel, ministered to in the finest restaurants, and otherwise dazzled. A dozen years later, just before *The Elephant Man* went into production, Brooks took his two 24-year-old screenwriters for a weekend in Paris. "He put us up at the Plaza Athenee," says Bergren, smiling at the memory, "and we drove out to the coast of Normandy, to see where he had been billeted as a soldier, during the war."

When I first ask Brooks why he began Brooksfilms, he replies, rippling his brows like a contemporary Tevye, "Somewhere in the Talmud, it tells you that you must return a portion of your gain in this world. You must give back." It is a response which, with its patriarchal pomposity, conviction, and charm, reveals as much about the man as does the company that bears his name. ■

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The Resurrection of Barbara Pym

Cited in 1977 as one of the most underrated authors of the twentieth century, this quiet British author has been rescued from obscurity.

BY ANNA SHAPIRO

ANDREW WHITTUCK

Barbara Pym.

The most conspicuous quality of Barbara Pym's career has been its near invisibility. If you look for her in *Contemporary Authors* for 1963 you will find a blank between Pyne and Pryor, though Pym appears in the "Permanent" edition of that reference work, with her "avocational interests" listed as "reading, domestic life, and cats." That year, at age 50, she had six novels out, all well received and popular in their British library editions. Her seventh was universally rejected. Unlike the currently popular short story writer Breece D'J Pancake and John Kennedy Toole, the posthumously published author of *A Confederacy of Dunces,* Barbara Pym did not take her own life in her despair at being rejected. She did stop writing.

Today something like Pym-mania has struck the literary world, justifying her classification as "permanent." When *The New York Times* polled writers last December, Eudora Welty, Anne Tyler, and Mary Gordon named her as a favorite. "The novelist most touted by one's most literate friends," a cover quote announces. The revival of her reputation began in 1977 when two distinguished British authors, Philip Larkin and Lord David Cecil, cited Pym in a *London Times* survey as one of the most underrated twentieth-century authors. As a direct result, *Quartet in Autumn*, a new novel she had finally dared write, was published, and the rejected manuscript of *An Unsuitable Attachment*, as if

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rehabilitated by its fourteen-year internment, was accepted.

Pym seems almost to have courted rejection and obscurity. They are, at least, her subjects, often disguised by a more conventional kind of courtship involving vicars and spinsters or an occasional anthropologist. One of the "excellent women" in the novel of that name states the case plainly: she is "for being unmarried . . . and by that I mean a positive rather than a negative state." The Anglican clergymen who populate these books are attracted equally by marriage and celibacy; it struck me that Pym's women are priests in drag. Barbara Pym never married, and her major preoccupation, not listed as an "avocation," was the church.

Her letters and diaries reveal a person far more worldly than her characters, one attractively bitchy and given to heights and depths of feeling that she keeps out of her fictional world. That world is an ideal version of the life she may have wanted, content with "reading, domestic life, and cats."

"Some tame gazelle, or some gentle dove: / Something to love, oh, something to love!" runs the epigraph to her first novel, sounding the theme for all that was to follow. Her spinsters are content to love their "gazelle"—a married archdeacon and a much-too-young curate, respectively—from afar. The point is to have something to love. Pym said she "would have liked to write a Margaret Drabble sort of novel" but, not having had marriage or babies, lacked the experience. Like the heroine of *Some Tame Gazelle,* Pym had expected to marry. That heroine is in her fifties and has loved her archdeacon since college days when, with no warning of a change in his affections, he married someone else. Pym likewise was in love when she was at Oxford, and her intended surprised everyone by marrying another. What is truly startling is that Pym wrote this tale of middle-aged spinsters before she became one: as if inscribing a self-fulfilling prophecy, she had begun *Gazelle* in 1934, when she was 21. It was published in 1950; it had taken her sixteen years to convert her stunning rejection into comedy.

Nothing can engender a sense of being ridiculous more than not being loved by someone who you think loves you. In her novels Pym proceeded to turn this ridicule on everything she did. She became editor of an anthropological magazine, and ridiculous anthropologists became abundant in her work. The jumble sales, parish meetings, and even the incense of church become sources of high silliness. Cooking is not scanted: the recipients of a good cook's efforts are ridiculously unworthy, or the cook is ridiculously incompetent or ridiculously fussy. Food and church combine at harvest-sale benefits or in harvest decorations for the altar, and the vegetable that always gets singled out is the marrow. What is this everlasting marrow, I wondered. The Oxford dictionary says "a kind of gourd," but the second, non-vegetable meaning takes on extra significance: "A companion, partner, mate. . . . A thing which makes a pair with another." Not for another sixteen years did Pym allow ridicule to give way to sadness in her work, and even then she didn't allow the more violent emotions.

Her letters and diaries reveal a person far more worldly than her characters, one attractively bitchy and given to heights and depths of feeling that she keeps out of her fictional world. That world is an ideal version of the life she may have wanted, content with "reading, domestic life, and cats." When she wasn't writing, she had the church. The church functions as community, if one chooses to participate in that part of it, and Pym did. The Church of England has been called "a social club. It's religion with the religion removed,"[1] and there's enough truth in this to make you smile. The church is also a perfect lover, offering no rejection slips or betrayals, but that is too cynical and too grossly functional a view. All of Pym's heroines are true embodiments of Christian humility, though I wish she could have made them as worldly as she was. Her only worldly heroine, Catherine in *Less Than Angels,* is probably her most autobiographical one. It is this unworldliness that separates a novel by Pym from "a Margaret Drabble sort of novel," not marriage and babies; the same unworldliness caused a British reviewer to call her "an anthropologist from the moon." In her final, more realistic and more worldly books, the characters—heroines none—do not choose humility so much as have it thrust upon them. That is the way of the world: imperfect, partial, and unfair.

I think it is this humility, a kind of clarity of spirit, that is attracting so many writers and readers to this author's quiet works. Modern literature, especially American literature, has come to feature immoderately the obstreperous claims of the ego; not to mention of the flesh, which Pym doesn't mention. Not that she was immune to these claims in life. Her despair when in her twenties of ever being a good writer was the cry of the notorious artistic ego. She had affairs, notably one with an "unsuitably" younger man after her lover's betrayal; she was "pleasantly sad" to leave him. Attractions to younger men crop up throughout her books, and form the subject of *An Unsuitable Attachment,* the book she had trouble publishing. In it, Ianthe Broome stays with the younger man. Maybe Pym regretted her own choice, although this seems unlikely. Ianthe's choice is unconvincing and does not improve Pym's least successful book.

This book also divides her six comedies from the final novels. There is nothing darkly latent in the comedies, which are pre-Freudian in tone if not in historical fact. In *Gazelle* a character is lulled by reading about debutantes, aristos, and "other comforting unrealities." Pym's early

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novels are prized for their similar effect; reading them, you want to drink cups of tea, eat buttered toast, and settle with a cat on your lap. The later ones are not about unrealities, and they are not comforting.

Pym's shift toward realism can be traced in the way she writes about food, which enters into everything. Time in the first six books is like Winnie the Pooh's clock set perpetually at 11: when it isn't time for "elevenses" it is teatime; luncheons may be "a cutlet" or "a joint," with "a sweet" to follow. With breakfasts of eggs and meat, and suppers following cake at tea, one wonders why all these people aren't immensely fat. In the later books there is a realistic relationship between the food eaten and body shape. You could say that food actually is the subject of *Quartet in Autumn*. While Letty worries about her weight, Marcia squirrels away a stock of canned goods that could take her through World War II were it to happen again—and starves herself to death. But food is a metaphor. What Marcia is trying to hoard, and what she is starving for, is love.

The theme is the same, though the metaphors are less stark, in the early novels. These novels must be what people think of when they compare Pym to Jane Austen, as they incessantly do. What female author with a hint of wit is not compared to Austen these days? It is true that both authors start their novels with a mix-and-match set of romantic possibilities, and their characters are preoccupied with propriety. But Austen uses the newly romanticized marriage-market of her day as a means of scoring or underscoring moral points, and her characters' concern with propriety is preeminently a moral concern. Pym characters are not in danger of committing moral or romantic enormities; exemplary of the ordinary, their concern for propriety is social and domestic. It would be easy to dismiss them as superficial, and Pym along with them. Again, religion comes in: "God makes himself known and is known in the ordinary routines of life," writes an Anglican priest.[2] Pym's work is an embodiment of this article of faith.

If Pym is no Jane Austen, is she as good as people are saying she is? In England she is now thought to be overrated. One British critic says that Pym's books are like Agatha Christie novels without the mystery—that they could use a murder or two. John Updike is repelled by the chilliness of Pym's solitaries. "To be sane is, to a great extent, to be sociable" is his aphoristic verdict. But Pym characters are not unsociable, they're just single. Perhaps their obsession with what is "suitable"—the word occurs every twenty or so pages in *Jane and Prudence*—is partly a way of holding on to social connection. The one character who fails to consider "suitability," the starving Marcia of Pym's best book, is indeed crazy.

Pym was always doubting her work, and it meant a great deal to her when people liked it. Up until 1950 her diary makes a sad record of unpublished work and loves lost; not until 1978 does the entry "success" appear. She did not get to see *Jane and Prudence* on the *Village Voice* best seller list—she died in 1980, of cancer—but she did enjoy the appreciation of the novelist Shirley Hazzard, who wrote, "Her books will last." One can only agree, and the new editions of her work will help bring that about. This month *Some Tame Gazelle* will be published in America for the first time. It is ironic that her first novel should be her last published here. But appropriate, too: Barbara Pym's life exemplifies the maxim that the last shall be first and the first shall be last. ■

Barbara Pym's books, in chronological order:

Some Tame Gazelle
Excellent Women
Jane and Prudence
Less Than Angels
A Glass of Blessings
No Fond Return of Love
An Unsuitable Attachment
Quartet in Autumn
The Sweet Dove Died
A Few Green Leaves

All published in America by E.P. Dutton. Paper: Harper & Row Perennial Library. Forthcoming is *A Very Private Eye*, selections made from her diaries and letters by Hilary Walton, a sister with whom she lived, and Hazel Holt, her friend, literary adviser, and executor. Her unpublished works and juvenilia are in the Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

Anna Shapiro is an **SR** contributing editor.

[1]Graham Cleese of Monty Python, in **The New York Times**, April 15, 1983.

[2]Urban T. Holmes III, **What Is Anglicanism?**, Morehouse-Barlow Co. Inc., Connecticut, 1982.

"Says here they had a big subway fire in New York during the rush hour. No Lapps were reported to have been injured."

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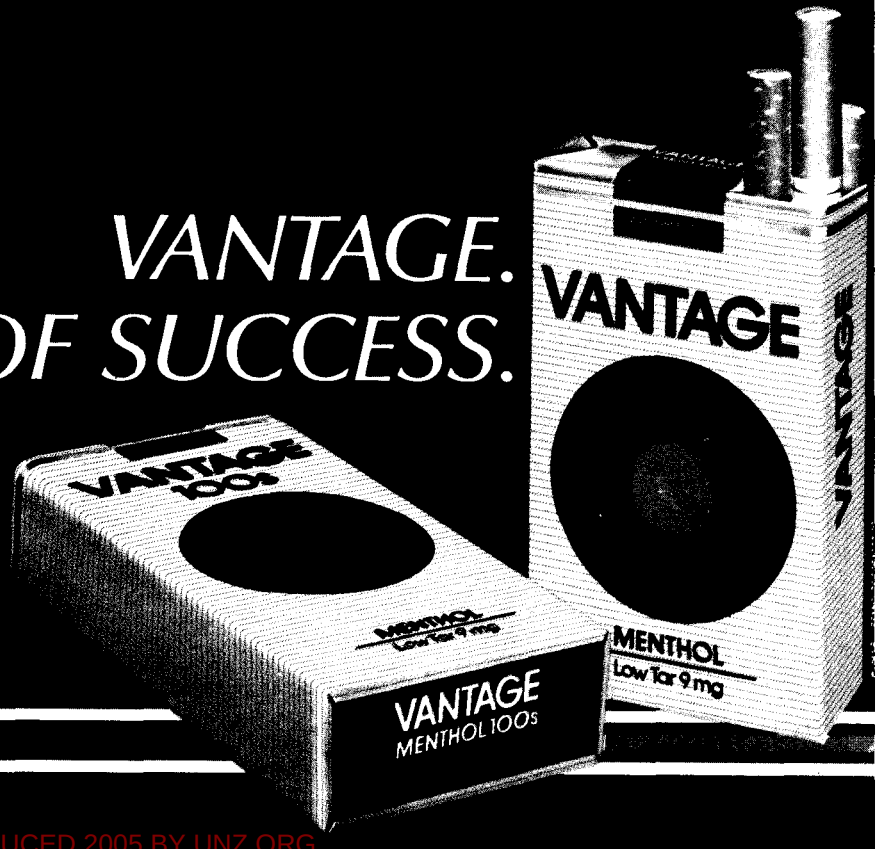

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ART

Carter Ratcliff

A Worshipful Observation

John Constable vies with J.M.W. Turner for the title of England's greatest painter. Further, his landscapes have had a respectful international audience ever since the 1820s, when Eugène Delacroix saw Constable's work on view in Paris. Astounded by the vibrancy of the Englishman's palette, Delacroix gave his own colors more variety and a higher key. Four decades later, these developments helped the Impressionists toward their innovations. Thus, Constable has an oblique connection to Claude Monet. Painters like Constable reassure us with this kind of secure art-historical position, yet the comfort and familiarity we feel in looking at the works of this particular exemplar of greatness can be misleading. If we're not careful, we may overlook the fact that Constable owes some of his strength to the fact that he is, on occasion, an exceedingly odd painter.

Over the centuries the English have shown two distinct attitudes towards artists. On one hand, they have supported foreigners who represent the mainstream of European culture: figures like Hans Holbein and Anthony Van Dyck. On the other, they save their full, long-term approval of home-grown practitioners for those who possess a degree of eccentricity. Of course we're so used to thinking of Constable and Turner as major figures that we're inclined to overlook everything strange in the beauties they offer. Has any painter, including Monet, ever been as sublimely persnickety as Constable in the act of recording sunlight and its nuances? Some of his daubs of white and shimmery yellow may be petals. Then again, they may be sudden flecks of light, careening off the dew-soaked grass. Constable's accuracy of observation is an endless source of ambiguity, and that is why one's reading of his imagery shifts and builds, like the weather in the southeastern region of England known as Constable country. His

John Constable's *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge:* the structure is soothing, and the heavily worked surface brings the painting to convincing life.

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world centers on the counties of Suffolk and Essex, though Constable country is first of all a territory of the imagination. Here vision is enhanced by the act of looking. The eye helps to create what it sees; this can feel more than a little unsettling.

As part of the recent *Britain Salutes New York* extravaganza, the Metropolitan Museum put on an exhibition of sixty-four Constable paintings. The occasion was the 200th anniversary of the Treaty of Paris, which ended hostilities between England and America once and for all, or so the festival promoters said; they seemed to overlook a fracas that broke out around 1812. Seven years old at the time of the Treaty, Constable was 26 when he first exhibited at the Royal Academy. Painting and exhibiting steadily for the rest of his life, he died in 1837 just short of his sixtieth birthday. The show at the Metropolitan covered every stage of his career. Among the major paintings in the show was a full-sized sketch for *View on the Stour near Dedham* (1822), one of the six immense canvases on which Constable staked his public reputation. At the other extreme were a number of cloud studies, executed in an inspired hurry on small sheets of paper.

Britain Salutes New York also included the Morgan Library's show of portrait drawings made by Hans Holbein at the court of Henry VIII. Holbein, who arrived in England from southern Germany by way of Basel, Switzerland, stands opposed in nearly every way to Constable. The portraitist was widely traveled, a citizen of Europe, while the landscapist of two centuries later hardly ever left his corner of England. Constable once visited the Lake District to the north, but found it uncongenial. He never set foot on the continent. Holbein brought the refinement of sixteenth-century Humanism to Henry's court, where few—save his friend, the beleaguered churchman Thomas More—had a full appreciation of his art. Constable gives us the illusion that the meadows and valleys, the gentle hills and meandering rivers of his world have somehow eluded the pressures of history and ambitious thought. His own ambition turned him toward the immediacies of experience.

By speaking of the peculiar vividness with which Constable's hand responded to his eye, I don't mean to suggest that he was a primitive. Far from it. In large compositions and small, his painting shows an easeful mastery of the grand traditions of Western art. Constable was active during the years when landscape was recognized, even by the heel-dragging French Academy, as a major genre. Landscape achieved this status by incorporating the magisterial forms and devices invented by the Renaissance and elaborated by the Baroque and its aftermath—periods in which meadow, mountain, and sky were made to serve as backdrops for heroic figures. It took nearly a century and a half for these motifs to step forward, fully acceptable as subjects in their own right. Constable did as much as any painter to win this recognition for landscape. His art is central to the genre, for it reaches back to the seventeenth-century pastorals of Claude Lorrain and the Dutch even as it leads forward, in a roundabout way, to the Impressionists.

Constable country is a territory of the imagination.

Constable knew landscape's past through prints, in part, and also through an acquaintance with pictures in English collections. Much of this legacy exasperated him—particularly details which seemed wrongly observed. Grass, he pointed out more than once, is green, not the mellow brownish hue it so often takes on in highly prized old canvases. Yet Constable structures a landscape much as Claude Lorrain and his innumerable followers do. There is, for instance, the matter of foreground, middle ground, and background. Naturally enough, this three-part arrangement doesn't appear in Constable's renderings of clouds, nor do all his preliminary sketches show it. Nonetheless, when he presented a major canvas, the entire machinery of high-style landscape was always in place and in good working order. Constable built his pictures conservatively, then embellished their surfaces with observations so alert they count—even now—as radical. Thanks to that alertness, which was widespread in the early nineteenth century, landscape stepped up to new levels of prestige.

In 1817, the Prince Regent presided over the opening of the Waterloo Bridge, which spans the Thames in commemoration of the British victory over Napoleon. Constable witnessed the ceremony and, fifteen years later, painted it. One of his few city scenes, this is hardly a picture of congested metropolitan space. In fact, the scene is as open to the sky as any of his paintings of Hampstead Heath or Brighton Beach. *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge* turns a view of London into one of Constable's characteristic river scenes. The flag-draped barges and St. Paul's distant silhouette seem almost out of place. Vessels nearest the lower edge of the painting establish the foreground, and point to the middle regions of the canvas where the royal entourage embarks. To the left, the river bank reaches toward distant stretches of water and sky. This pictorial structure is soothing in its familiarity—and vigorous too, for it is charged with all of Constable's mastery of traditional landscape. However, the painting's most convincing life is in its rough, heavily worked surface.

Step back the requisite distance, and the roughness becomes the scintillation of a radiant afternoon. Contemporary eyes find even more pleasure in the artist's study for this painting: rougher still, it is even more vibrant. In his own time, Constable was criticized for leaving his canvases unfinished, and there is no denying that their textures can perplex. It is sometimes difficult to bring these flickering images into focus. The same can be said of Turner's later works. Yet there are moments when Turner seems to transmute matter into sheer light. His art brought him to a threshold, beyond which stood the Angel of The Revelation. Constable, as usual, stayed closer to home. Instead of turning objects into light, he made light itself seem as palpable as foliage, river banks, and barges. ■

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DANCE

Nancy Goldner

Real Life Is Unrealistic

If one were to choose the century's greatest ballet, it would be George Balanchine's *Agon*. The tour de force, standing with no precedent and no progeny, would be Frederick Ashton's *Enigma Variations*. Presented by Britain's Royal Ballet during a week's layover in New York, en route to the Far East, it was ample reward for an otherwise silly repertory, some of it, alas, by Ashton.

Enigma Variations achieves what no other dance has. Conceived in non-narrative terms, it nevertheless plays like a novel, imparting the kind of information novels do, and using the novel's multi-faceted attack. In describing character, this ballet necessarily describes society, and vice versa. It exists in the present while successfully assuring the viewer it will move forward in time to a conclusion. We begin some novels with a slight panic: wanting immediately to know through which characters the theme will be stated, we reject the writer's staking-out of the territory as a false lead. In *Enigma Variations* Ashton's surveillance of the territory becomes, in a sense, the main theme, a fact that may alienate some from this masterpiece. But like the best of novels, *Enigma Variations* is immediately upfront about the protagonist's identity. When the curtain goes up he's standing alone in the middle of the stage while others stand at the sidelines in dimmer light.

> The ballet has art as well as life on its mind.

Pondering a music score, his stance is suggestive, yet natural. The arrangement of the others around the garden set is drawn from real life, too. One lady reclines in a swing. At a table at the other side of the garden a man and woman converse over the last sip of tea. A few people stand at the back, chatting under a trellis leading away from the garden. A gentleman sits in a chair, doing, as far as one can tell, nothing. The illusion of reality is established at once and is never lost. That it is never lost is the miracle of *Enigma Variations,* for its structure is the antithesis of realism. *Enigma Variations* is a string of variations in which each character comes on and does his dance. The format is straight out of nineteenth-century convention, in essence no different from the third-act wedding divertissement beloved by choreographers because it was the moment they could forget story and get on with the dance. In *Enigma Variations* Ashton gets to eat his cake. He takes a convention profoundly antagonistic to realism and twirls it round to serve realism—at least, to cohabitate with it. In so doing he makes *Enigma Variations* a full dance experience as well as a dramatic one.

The man at stage center looking at

LESLIE E. SPATT

The cast of *Enigma Variations* provides a full and dramatic dance experience.

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a score is Edward Elgar. The people who drop by to visit, and to perform their variations, are his friends and neighbors. Each of them is triply described: in Ashton's choreography; in the Elgar score itself, which the composer called *Enigma Variations (My Friends Pictured Within);* and in epigrams that Elgar wrote about his friends and which Ashton uses in the program notes. Much of the characterization, both musically and choreographically, is pictorial. Elgar's tricycle-riding crony circles the stage on his contraption, and that's it for that variation. A fellow fond of bulldogs prances with his hands curled like paws. Since their time on the stage is short, they function in the ballet as vignettes and in Elgar's life, one assumes, as acquaintances. Others are on stage when they're not dancing, and one can tell by their relaxed, unpredictable comings and goings that they're permanent fixtures in Elgar's life. One man, in fact, seems so comfortable in Elgar's garden that he feels free to sit in the chair *(his* chair it comes to be) and do nothing at all. The mutually felt intimacy between him and the home is verified later in the ballet, when he is a witness to a falling-out between Elgar and his wife, depicted as a variation in the form of a pas de deux.

But now I have given away a secret of the ballet's power. Although it matters how people dance, it matters more what those people do in the presence of which other people. The order of the dances counts also. Why is it, for example, that Elgar and his wife are at odds now, when shortly before, in the musical and emotional climax of the ballet, they had pledged eternal devotion? The question is answered in the variation following the argument. A lady, not seen before, wafts into the garden on a bed of fog and dances before the entranced Elgar as a vision. The woman of the past she is, and evidently on Elgar's mind, as is everything at this point in the man's life.

Sequence of action and the context in which action is set are literary concerns. *Enigma Variations* accumulates the bulk of its meaning through them, even though it's a pure-dance work. Although each variation is interesting to look at in itself, each is a figurative variation on a theme that isn't entirely grasped until the ballet is over. The theme, of course, is the variety of species in Elgar's garden and the variety of experiences that can be had there. It's a place where kids can romp, where tricyclists can take a spin, where love affairs, some illicit, some imagined, and some socially sanctioned, may proceed, where a man can eat his lunch in peace and in his favorite chair, where a cellist may practice his craft, and where Elgar may worry about his future as a composer. For so small a place as Elgar's backyard to accommodate so much and many kinds of life is, to me, a depiction of earthly paradise. And it is for this vision of life, profoundly communal yet private, that I would return to *Enigma Variations* many times over.

But the ballet has art as well as life on its mind. Certainly the story takes on added significance because the hero is an artist, and added piquancy because he's drawn from real life by Ashton and *is* real life through his music. We don't read too much into the scenario to find in Ashton's earthly paradise a thesis on the conditions necessary for art-making. Yet as depicted by Ashton, the artist's final triumph isn't conceived "artistically." That is, when at the end of the ballet Elgar receives a telegram informing him that his *Enigma Variations* will be played by an important orchestra, thus ensuring him recognition, the choreography does not suddenly veer into an exploration of the music. It remains true to its representational style. All the friends gather round to cheer Elgar and his wife, and in the closing moment one of them takes a snapshot of the group.

Meanwhile, back in the structure department, the ballet proceeds as formally as ever. The gathering of the clan is conceived in strict finale form, its development and patterns as antirealistic as the snapshot bit is realistic. Following the music's recapitulatory program, the characters each take a square of territory and repeat phrases from their variations. Four of the prominent ladies *bourrée* circles in the center of the stage, like the good fairies in *The Sleeping Beauty*. Then everyone joins in big unison jumps, like the crescendo of a Balanchine symphony. It's at the finale that Ashton's two-pronged attack comes to its most intense clash, with the garden suddenly transformed into ballroom and the motley crew into anonymous attendants. Then just as quickly, via the snapshot, does the ballet revert to real-life illusion. Ashton provides no resolution, no synthesis, and seems to enjoy not providing it. He'll have it two ways. The audience learns two things: how to build a life, and how to build a ballet. ■

LESLIE E. SPATT

Derek Rencher as Elgar, and Monica Mason as his wife.

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Judith Crist

The Children's Hour

Between the spring and the autumn, when the drive-ins are in flower, comes a pause in the critical season. . . . No need to continue the parody; summer is indeed the Children's Hour of movie-going. The marquees create a sense of déjà vu and the realization that American movies are being geared exclusively to the 15- to 25-year-olds, who will bring $1 billion or $2 billion to the summer box office while the rest of us sit back and wait for cable television's freebies.

Of the déjà vu, there's the third installment of George Lucas' *Star Wars* series. *Return of the Jedi* offers the old familiar characters amid freshly dazzling special effects and some new faces, including amusingly repulsive reptiles and deliciously frazzled teddy bears. For plot, we have the ultimate encounter between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader. The movie's technology merits applause, but is it worth criticism? The film has an audience of the devout, expanding at one end with the coming-of-movie-age youth, at the other with those at last curious about a six-year, three-movie craze. Other than comparisons with their predecessors, what is there to make of all these sequels: *Superman III; Octopussy,* the thirteenth James Bond film; *Staying Alive*, which should be subtitled "Saturday Night Fever II" since John Travolta continues in character, albeit under Sylvester Stallone's rather than John Badham's direction; *Smokey and the Bandit III*, now minus Burt Reynolds; and *In Search of the Pink Panther*, now without the late Peter Sellers? The question is rhetorical; these movies are for the "children," those who revel in repetition and are comfortable with the familiar.

What refreshment or adventure there is in this summer season comes in large part from John Badham, a director already dubbed "this year's Spielberg." Last summer Spielberg had two critically acclaimed box-office smashes, *Poltergeist* and *E.T.*, and this summer Badham has them in *Blue Thunder* and *WarGames*. But Badham, British-born, American-bred, Yale-educated, and nurtured first in a Hollywood studio and then as a director in television, is no new phenomenon. Badham made his first

> John Badham has been dubbed "this year's Spielberg."

theatrical film in 1976 and made five more in the following seven years. His first film, *The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings*, was a delightful fact-fiction about the Negro Baseball League in the Thirties; it offered, among many pleasures, what Badham has called "a Clark Gable-Spencer Tracy relationship" between Billy Dee Williams and James Earl Jones. His second was 1977's *Saturday Night Fever*, which brought stardom to Travolta and fueled the disco-dancing craze. His third, 1979's *Dracula*, is a lavish and erotic version of the classic, pitting Frank Langella's Count against Laurence Olivier's Van Helsing with Kate Nelligan as the pawn. Badham's artistic, if not financial, triumph came in 1981 with *Whose Life Is It Anyway?*, a stunning expansion of Brian Clark's stageplay (by Clark and Reginald Rose), given power by Richard Dreyfuss as a quadriplegic demanding the freedom of choice between life and death. From this personalized exploration of the human condition, Badham has turned to something entirely different: things, rather than people.

Blue Thunder is a movie about a super helicopter of the same name. Blue Thunder is armed with a variety of death-dealing devices and super-surveillance gadgets that do away with personal freedoms under the pretext of supplying ultimate security. Will vile Malcolm McDowell and his cohorts use Blue Thunder to rule the world, or will good Vietnam veteran and dedicated cop Roy Scheider preserve democracy? All this is resolved in a breathtaking series of chases and encounters that includes mind-boggling aerial gymnastics, as whirlybirds dart and dodge among the towers, bridges, and underpasses of downtown Los Angeles. It's a thriller: roaring soundtrack and pounding visuals, the release coming only at the finale. The flaw in logic becomes apparent only when you've hit the street. Hitchcock, in his "kitchen" theory, said that the "Hey—wait a minute!" reaction to an illogical contrivance in a film would come later, when one opened the refrigerator door for an after-movie snack. Unfortunately, *Blue Thunder*'s premises fall apart much sooner. What remains beyond the dazzling technology is a disturbed feeling about the possibilities of "security" systems, a lingering disquietude about our privacy.

A greater disquietude comes with *WarGames*, Badham's cautionary "fairy tale" about the no-win aspect of thermonuclear war. Understandably, it was chosen as the final offering at the Cannes Film Festival. It is the story of a teenaged computer genius who, attempting to sneak a

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Dabney Coleman, Matthew Broderick, Ally Sheedy, and John Wood in *WarGames.*

look at some forthcoming video games, accidentally taps into the Defense Department's early warning aerospace computer system and challenges its war-games computer to play global thermonuclear war. Chillingly possible, as is shown by false alerts at the North American Defense Command and by breaks into corporate computer systems, the tap-in is discovered and the lad is apprehended by federal agents convinced he is a Russian spy. No one bothers to hear him out, so our protagonist is off and running to save us all from doomsday as the computer relentlessly proceeds toward World War III, with help from its ever-credulous military and civilian adherents. The computer has been taught to think and to win; it has not learned "futility" and that there are "no-win" situations.

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***WarGames:* the computer has not learned that there are "no-win" situations.**

The screenplay, by Lawrence Lasker and Walter F. Parkes, is enhanced by glitteringly authentic hardware, a breathless pace, and a fine cast headed by Matthew Broderick (the gifted young star of Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs).* With a light hand that keeps this terrifying movie in focus, Badham has brought *Dr. Strangelove* into the computer age. The triumph is in Broderick's David: an ordinary teenager, bored with biology (after all, he can tap into the school computer and give himself a respectable "C" and, gallantly, his girlfriend an "A" when they've both failed the course), resentful of household chores, and freaked out on video games and computers. He's such a nice kid, and so resourceful, that he deserves to be a hero. It's not until you are home, after-movie snack consumed and about to step into bed, that the first "Hey—wait a minute!" comes to mind.

Badham makes no bones about gearing his movies to a young audience, but he does so with such skill, intelligence, and zest that their impact is even greater on a mature audience. The plot-logic may be shaky and the director manipulative, but the movie has a terrifying implication. ■

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LANGUAGE

Thomas H. Middleton

Freshman Class?

A few years ago, my wife and I were in Vermont on one of our soul-refreshing trips from Southern California back to our Eastern origins. We were with two friends, native Californians who, we had learned to our astonishment, had never experienced New York or New England. This was in early October, and the Vermont foliage was coming into its full autumnal splendor.

In Woodstock, we saw a poster announcing that Princeton and Dartmouth would be playing football in Hanover, New Hampshire, that coming Saturday. We decided to go.

The day of the game barely dawned at all: lowering skies, pregnant storm clouds, no sun. Nevertheless, we drove over to New Hampshire, buying foul-weather gear at an Army-Navy store on the way.

The gods were with us, and the sky cleared spectacularly, leaving a few drifting clouds for dramatic effect. It was the sort of great football day I remembered from my youth: chilly, breezy, with those glorious gold and russet leaves swirling all over the ground. Our friends were delighted, and so, of course, were we. Hanover was gorgeous, Dartmouth proved to be quintessentially Ivy League—a refreshingly far cry from the mammoth UCLA—and I was relishing the anticipated casual elegance of an Ivy League football afternoon.

We took our seats on the visitors' side of the stadium, appreciating the crisp air and the fresh faces of the young men and women. In my day, there were no female students at Dartmouth or Princeton; I'm glad they're finally there.

Then, as the Princeton team came romping out onto the field, a classic picture of exuberant amateurism, a large portion of the Dartmouth freshman class started shouting in chorus "Princeton sucks! Princeton sucks!"

It was a depressing moment. Here were these 17- and 18-year-old boys and girls, just embarking on their higher education, shouting what struck us as an obscenity.

Later, I talked to young people of the approximate age of those Dartmouth freshmen, and I asked them about expressions like "Princeton sucks." It turns out that *sucks* isn't an obscenity at all to the younger generation. "Princeton sucks" is just about the same as "Princeton stinks."

Words do, indeed, change their meanings and their flavors, and what was unprintable and unsayable a few years ago is printed and said with some regularity this year.

In 1980, a play by Bill C. Davis called *Mass Appeal* opened in New York. It involves a middle-aged priest and a young seminarian. The seminarian prepares a sermon, and the priest criticizes it, at first referring to it as a "kick-ass" sermon. That's a phrase that would have shocked at least some members of a New York audience thirty-five years ago. The priest later tells the young seminarian "Mark, your sermon sucks."

I guess *sucks* has indeed taken on the connotation of *stinks*. Still, "Princeton sucks!" is a lousy thing for a bunch of kids to yell at a football game, and if I'd heard a bunch of Princeton freshmen yelling "Dartmouth sucks!"—as I am now reasonably certain they might—I'd have been embarrassed and a bit angry.

Language changes, and words that were once considered to be ultimately taboo are now out in the open. Cultured young ladies now freely use language that, thirty years ago, a young man would have been ostracized for using, had he done so in mixed company. I am ambivalent about this sort of thing.

The acceptability of certain words and phrases is dependent in large part upon social mores, and social mores are, in turn, influenced to a great degree by words and phrases. Vast numbers of people sincerely believe that many of the problems of the modern world—the high divorce rate, illegitimate births, abortions, prostitution, and crime in the streets—can be pegged directly to the Berkeley "free-speech" movement of the Sixties. That was actually less of a free-speech movement than an insistence upon students' rights to scream obscenities at anyone they disagreed with, drowning out the offending speech.

Some sort of release of the power of obscenity was inevitable, especially given the enormous social pressures of the Sixties. In some ways, that release has been welcome.

Remember the Hollywood films made during and about World War II in which, with bullets whining and crashing, bombs screaming and exploding, death and pandemonium everywhere, our G.I. Joes said things like "Heck!" and "Darn!"? To those of us who were in the service or, indeed, to anyone who knew anything at all about human behavior, this sort of dialogue was not simply laughable, it was embarrassing. I for one was delighted to see some of those absurb taboos fall.

I'm sure freshman classes will continue to captivate us older people at times and to infuriate us at others, not least in their use of language. I pray fervently that they will very quickly learn richer aspersions than "Princeton (or anyone) sucks!" That's just too infra dig. ■

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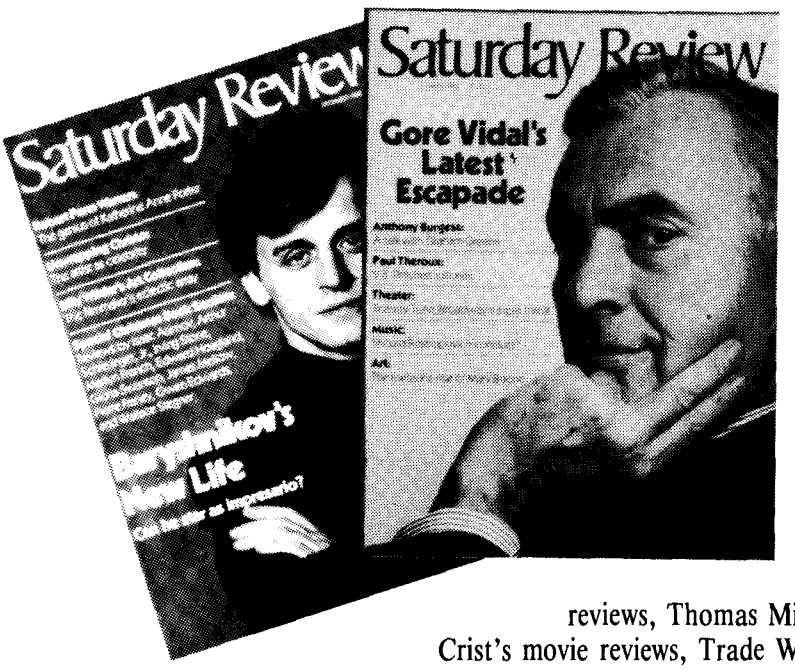

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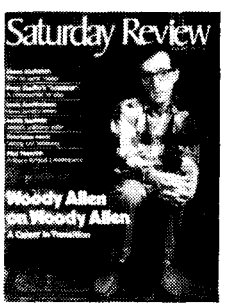

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MUSIC

Linda Sanders

Stormy Weather

As the New York concert season went into the home stretch, the general pandemonium was not lessened by a great deal of rain. Bad weather has a measurably negative effect on the quality of musical experience in at least three areas: oboists' reeds, string players' intonation, and the audience's intellectual involvement. This last involves an increase in pre-concert platitudes —"Hi! Wet enough for you?"—as well as last-movement anxiety—"Can I get a cab?" Beyond that, the general miasma that seemed to lie upon a number of concerts during this period must be attributed to the strictly human vicissitudes of musical performance.

Carnegie Hall was the setting for three visiting orchestras at the end of April, beginning with Andrew Davis and the Toronto Symphony. Davis' strength lies more in the area of solidity and reliability than in subtle detail, elegant turns of phrase, or revealing insight. The results are saved from being bluff or naive by the exceptionally warm, vivid sound he gets from the orchestra. The program opened with a piece by Davis, *"La Serenissima" (Inventions on a Theme by Claudio Monteverdi),* seven associative vignettes of Venice past and present that share characteristics of his conducting: wholesome, a little square, but pleasing. Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* was the orchestral showpiece of the evening, one that was well matched to Davis' gifts. By choosing tempos that were invariably right, he released the natural momentum of the work's rhythmically self-propelled melody lines. This, combined with the orchestra's luxuriant sonorities, made the performance a particularly luminous one.

Unfortunately, the ease and loveliness of the concert were marred by Isaac Stern's performance of the Sibelius Violin Concerto. For some years, the kindest word for Stern's playing has been *inconsistent.* Audiences continue to cheer; they did so at this performance in spite of raw intonation, runs that may have been improvised, coarse attacks, and a tone that was remarkable in its lack of vibrancy. In a musician of Stern's experience and stature, technical mishaps are easily overlooked if some vision is brought to the work. Except for a few lyrical moments in the second movement, that was not the case here. Davis' wholesomeness was out of place as he led the orchestra through a perfunctory reading that erased the mystery and icy beauty of this concerto.

Baritone Michael Rippon.

Several days later the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Edo de Waart, who has since announced his resignation as music director, came to Carnegie Hall for two concerts. I heard the first, which opened with a leaden performance of Haydn's Symphony No. 98 in B-flat major. De Waart had cut down the orchestra, but it was still bottom-heavy; the string section, including six cellos and three basses, produced a formidable symphonic sound. They made the harpsichord seem, as it tinkled alongside them, like more of a musicological conceit than an integral part of the orchestral texture.

The next piece on the program was the *Symphony* of Tobias Picker, a young composer whose music finds a warm reception among audiences as well as among the contemporary music establishment. In two movements, the *Symphony* has something for everyone. It has braggadocio, pulsations, and virtuosity. It has climactic cymbal crashes, structural cohesion, and thirds. It has all the trappings of the orchestral showpieces of the past, except heart. Or rather, whatever heart it may contain is consumed by cleverness, a delight in making the orchestra do characteristic orchestra tricks, seemingly just for the fun of the thing. In an unintentionally ironic bit of programming, the *Symphony* was followed by the main attraction of the evening, Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. Rachmaninoff's showpiece, an honest panegyric to bald sentiment, only underlined the essentially brittle sensibility being expressed through voluptuous means in Picker's *Symphony.*

Alicia de Larrocha was the unlikely soloist in the Rachmaninoff, performing it with an intelligent musicianship that was, as always, a pleasure to hear, but that had too much sensitivity and too little pizzazz to suit the piece. The orchestra had had some ensemble problems earlier, but in the Rachmaninoff the sections were better balanced and the individual playing more distinguished.

The late-Romantic repertory was featured again two days later when the Indianapolis Symphony brought a program comprising Rachmaninoff's First Piano Concerto and Mahler's Sixth Symphony to the Carnegie Hall

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stage. John Nelson's conducting gave the music sweep and direction, but coloristic effects in the Mahler were blunted by the orchestra's invariably harsh sound. In light of the impressive degree of accuracy and ensemble in all the sections, and of the players' obvious concentration, this was surprising. Tone quality may simply have too low a place on Nelson's list of priorities. Pianist Jean-Phillipe Collard, the soloist in the Rachmaninoff, was technically equal to the piece in every way and played with engaging bravado.

In contemporary music, one of the season's major events was the three-concert series at New York's Symphony Space of the British contemporary chamber ensemble, The Fires of London. The Fires have assumed near-legendary status over the past thirteen years due to their combination of musical and theatrical capabilities. They frequently perform the music-theater works of Peter Maxwell Davies, founder of The Fires and, in the minds of many, England's foremost composer next to Sir Michael Tippett.

The state of contemporary music in the U.S. made their visit particularly interesting. Here, art-music is still largely divided between two camps: the academic classical composers, who generally write music for conventional instruments in a relatively complex, often atonal idiom; and the experimental composers, who often write for electronic or amplified instruments and who may use both vernacular elements and mixed media (dance, visual arts, and much theater, which is often non-narrative). Davies and The Fires of London incorporate elements from both camps. They play conventional classical instruments, including flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, and percussion. The musical idiom is basically atonal, but can also incorporate Renaissance music or ragtime. And they do music-theater, which American academic composers and performers generally avoid. But the hope that they could combine the best of both worlds—the professionalism of the academics with the vitality and imagination of the experimentalists—didn't pan out.

Of the seven Davies works presented, the most memorable was a purely instrumental piece, *Image, Reflection, Shadow* (1982), which, though unusually lovely, might have been programmed with impunity on the most conventional of contemporary chamber concerts. The Fires are fine musicians, but the performances and Davies' works themselves seldom transcended the tame. The one exception was *Vesalii Icones*, a vivid solo piece for male dancer and instrumental ensemble that derives its visual aspect from sixteenth-century illustrations by Vesalius, and its narrative from a slightly modified Stations of the Cross.

The "theater" in the theater pieces usually comprises minimal stage tableaux and one featured performer. Simple trappings do not necessarily yield simplistic results, but here the sensibility was as rudimentary as the means. When I was a student, Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (1969) as sung by the brilliant Julius Eastman seemed the last word in wild avant-gardism. Here it seemed prosaic, in part because baritone Michael Rippon was less than an absorbing presence, and partly because so much has been done in music-theater during the past decade that one now expects the visual and dramatic aspects to be as inventive as the music. *Miss Donnithorne's Maggot* (based on the same figure Dickens used for Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*), like the *Eight Songs*, is plotted along a course of undeveloping, unspecific, and cliched madness. It cemented the impression of a highly calculated and sophisticated musical discourse that is combined with a catch-as-catch-can, conventional, even distracting veneer of theatricality. Soprano Mary Thomas did her best to make something of Miss Donnithorne, but her solutions were mostly of limited interest.

After being disappointed at so many concerts, I began to wonder if I was just getting jaded.

After being disappointed at so many concerts, I began to wonder if I was just getting jaded; did it really take a naked man running around the stage with his underpants on his head—which was how Davies' *Vesalii Icones* ended—to keep my attention? Fortunately, a concert by the American Composers Orchestra on April 25 put these doubts to rest. As its name suggests, this New York-based ensemble is devoted exclusively to works by American composers, most of them contemporary.

Stylistically speaking, the contemporary classical mainstream is getting pretty crowded. But it is still there, represented in this concert by Tison Street's *Montsalvat*, a translucent work that makes ingenious use of a sixteenth-century *cantus firmus;* by Ernst Krenek's *Die Nachtigall* ("The Nightingale"), Op. 68, a lush work for soprano, two flutes, and orchestra that predates the composer's adoption of twelve-tone technique; and by David Del Tredici's *Adventures Underground* for soprano, folk group, and orchestra, another in his obsessive but often entertaining series of works based on Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland.* Soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson sang both the Krenek and Del Tredici works with great flair.

Minimalism made a bow with the world premiere of the orchestral version of San Francisco-based composer John Adams' *Shaker Loops*, a piece that, in its original version for string septet, made news a couple of years ago on both coasts and on both sides of the academic-experimentalist fence. This version blunts the fine edge of the original, or at least it did in this performance, but it is still a wonderful piece.

The work that stood out in this concert was Morton Feldman's *The Viola in My Life IV* for viola and orchestra. Feldman's music—soft, static, weaving in and out of silence—can be heaven or hell, depending on the performance and on whether the listener can release himself from the notion that music must develop, or make noise, to be absorbing. Violist Jesse Levine's exquisite playing made this performance heaven. ■

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RECORDS

Gregory Sandow

A Sampling of Schoenberg

In *The New York Review*, Cambridge University Press advertises books "for thoughtful readers." Arnold Schoenberg's famously difficult music is for thoughtful listeners. It's cerebral and dissonant, as everyone knows, but that's not why you perhaps haven't liked it. Film scores are often dissonant, and you still go to the movies. Look at Brahms, a favorite of people who like *beautiful* music: *Brahms* is cerebral, or at least he was more concerned than any composer before him with the abstract patterns underlying such surface details as his sumptuous melodies. ("Any fool can hear *those*," he might have said.) That's one reason Schoenberg liked him so much. No: as Alban Berg argued in a famous essay, Schoenberg's music is difficult mainly because it's drenched with ideas or, more bluntly, because it's complicated.

It's asymmetrical, which means it's not arranged in the regular stanzas of your favorite symphony or song, but moves instead in the quirkier rhythms of prose. It's constantly varied: the return of a new theme can be as hard to recognize as a new friend whom you first met relaxing at the beach, and whom you saw next in the city, hailing a cab after a sleepless night. Worst of all, nearly everything Schoenberg wrote is a tangle of separate lines, so complex that principal melodies have to be marked in the score with a special sign. How can you find your way through all that?

Start listening with all the concentrated attention you'd bring to a book from Cambridge University Press. Or—at least to begin with—by hearing the tangle as nothing more than a web of intriguing sound. Listen to a recent CBS recording of Schoenberg's crazily genial Op. 24 *Serenade*, conducted by Pierre Boulez (CBS M 36735). It's a relaxed performance, so relaxed that you'd swear the musicians were playing the piece for fun, as they might play Gershwin. The strings are lithe, the clarinets sing, and the guitarist and mandolinist don't rattle as roughly as their counterparts on competing recordings, perhaps because they're recorded at a decent distance. All this helps when you're letting the piece just dance through your ears. When you listen more carefully, you might wonder what relation the variations in the third of the *Serenade*'s seven movements have to their theme (a long story), or how anything as rhythmically unstable as the second movement can be a minuet. You might find the work's single vocal movement oddly abstract, even though the passionate Petrarch text tells you what the music is supposed to mean. John Shirley-Quirk vaults smoothly over the wide skips in his part, but could any singer project so jumpy a melody with the precision and ease the Ensemble Intercontemporain brings to the instrumental lines? You'll have no trouble understanding why Schoenberg called the first movement "March"—it's overlaid with an unbalanced waltz, but that's part of the fun—or the sixth movement "Song Without Words." In the fifth movement, "Dance Scene," you'll easily hear the lilting clarinet refrain or, with a little imagination, the deliberately corny transitions that might make you think you're hearing the *Serenade* in a Viennese night club.

Flip the record and you'll hear Schoenberg's chamber arrangement of the *Song of the Wood Dove* from his early, lushly romantic *Gurrelieder*, and the sarcastic *Ode to Napoleon*, a late work for string quartet, piano, and speaking voice. Jessye Norman, good as she is, spoils the *Wood Dove* because her creamy sound (as recorded, anyway) overpowers its leaner accompaniment. Ham acting by David Wilson-Johnson weakens the *Ode*, indigestible to begin with because of the ranting Byron poem that serves as its text. The Ensemble Intercontemporain's strings are as limpid here as they are in the *Serenade*, but still, both the *Ode* and the *Song of the Wood Dove* are more convincing on the London Sinfonietta's five-record collection of Schoenberg's *Complete Works for Chamber Ensemble* (Decca SXLK 6660-4), a British recording never released in this country, but available from stores that stock imports.

For more Schoenberg—but not five records' worth—try last year's London recording of *Erwartung* (LDR 71015), backed (as they say in the pop world) with the Op. 8 *Six Songs* for soprano and orchestra. Anja Silja sings and Christoph Von Dohnányi conducts the Vienna Philharmonic. The songs are ungainly, too large-boned for their length. *Erwartung*, an opera, is one of the strangest and most powerful pieces written in this century. There's only one character, a woman lost in a wood, or rather in a neurotic's fantasy of ghastly "anticipation" (as the title might be translated). Her fear, as well as the frightening heaviness of the warm night air, the sky's pallor, the "aghast" moon, and the dew of an unearthly dawn—every shift of feeling or atmosphere, which in *Erwartung's* uneasy world are the same, is rendered in Schoenberg's music with the unsettling precision you might find in a schizophrenic who's helpless to act but somehow still knows everything you're thinking. The musical style is an equally unsettling combination of Strauss and Debussy,

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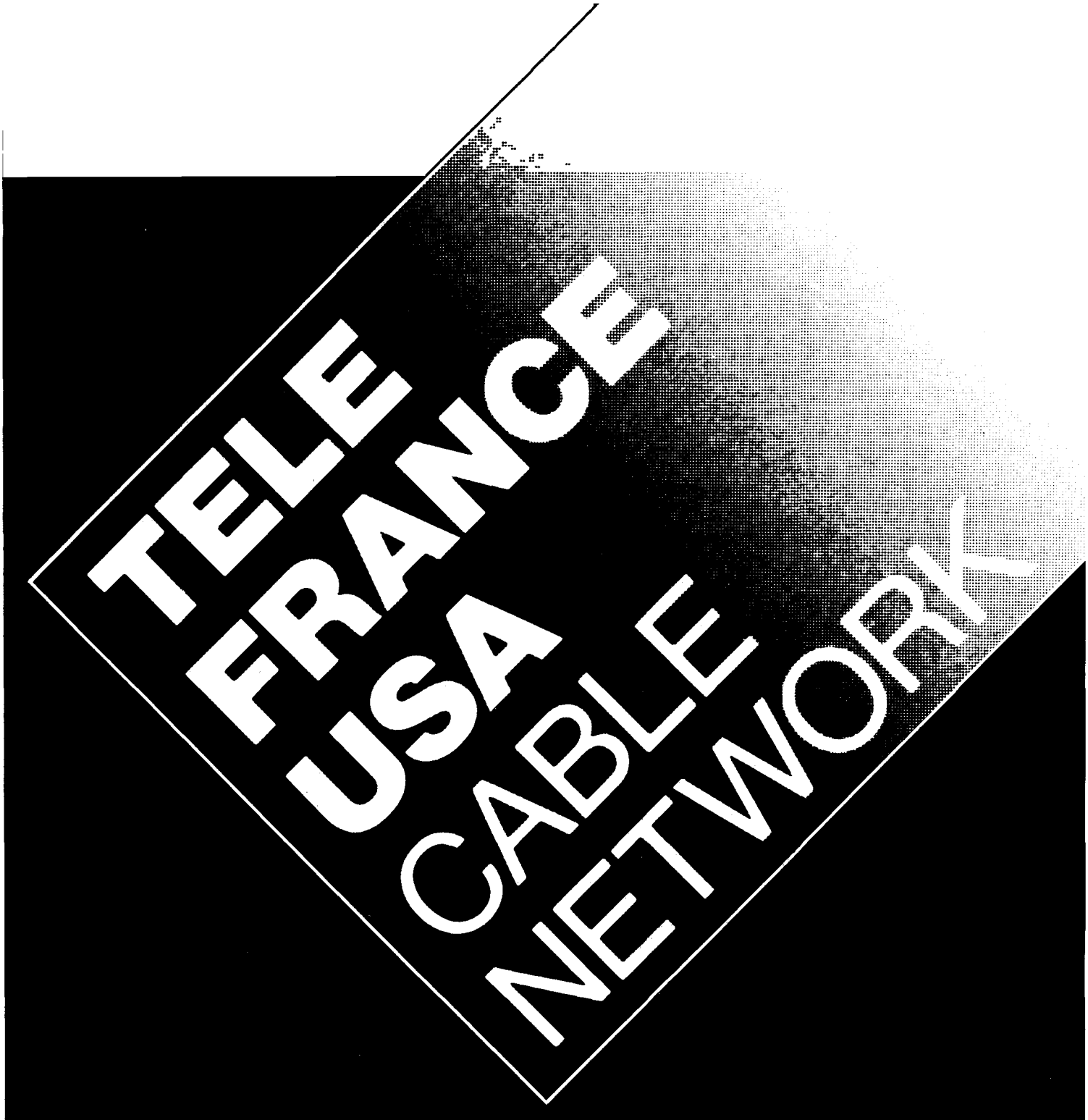

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of blood-drenched horror and trembling reticence, resolving now and then into a yearning, wordless orchestral song.

From *Erwartung* go to Schoenberg's *String Trio*, as performed on a Nonesuch release (D-79028) by musicians from the Sante Fe Chamber Music Festival. Like most of Schoenberg's later works, it follows the strict rules of the twelve-tone system. That sounds scary, as if Schoenberg had replaced feeling with inhuman calculation. He didn't. Shakespeare follows strict rules in his sonnets, and are they inhuman? If there's any difference in sound between Schoenberg's twelve-tone music and his more freely composed earlier works, it's that the twelve-tone pieces are simpler and, if anything, less dissonant, a surprise that's tricky to explain but easy to demonstrate: just compare the *String Trio* to *Erwartung* or the *Serenade*. In any case, the *String Trio* (which follows twelve-tone rules less strictly than usual) tells a heartfelt story about Schoenberg's near-fatal heart attack, his treatment (including wrenching injections, audible in the music), and his quiet joy when finally he was strong enough to compose again. On the Nonesuch recording it gets the attentive and passionate performance it deserves (as does the familiar *Verklärte Nacht,* in its chamber form, on the other side), even if microphones placed too close to the instruments keep soft moments from sounding as frail as they should, and even if the musicians walk on the surface of the music a little too much.

There are problems, too, with the performances of *Erwartung* and the *Serenade*, which I've saved for the end because I still recommend both recordings. The *Serenade* has never sounded as much like an entertainment as it does under Boulez (his earlier Everest recording, now deleted, was a bit too frantic). *Erwartung* has never sounded so clear, and in any case the only other domestically available recording (Robert Craft's on CBS M2S-679) is much too crudely conducted. This *Serenade* is *too* relaxed. When you listen carefully you may wish that Boulez had made the principal melodies stand out more clearly, that he'd enforced sharper rhythms and accents, and above all that he'd bent a bit in his belief that music doesn't need expression, and had given each new thing to appear in the piece a distinct new taste. In *Erwartung*, Silja's not skittish enough, and the orchestra—thanks partly to recording techniques that deliver each strand of the music, but somehow not the whole—plays what sounds more like a dissection than a performance: frighteningly precise, but cold.

Style—more elusive and more important than passion, precision, or clarity—is exactly what's missing in *Erwartung*. For that, search for the hottest *Erwartung* on records, dimly reproduced, but conducted by Hermann Scherchen with the same commitment he'd bring to Mahler; it's on the West German label Wergo (WER 50001, imported by the German News Company, 220 East 86th Street, New York, NY 10028). Or wait for Discocorp's upcoming re-release of Schoenberg's four string quartets, as performed by a quartet led by Schoenberg's friend Rudolf Kolisch (contact Discocorp at P.O. Box 771, Berkeley, CA 94701).

Above all, rush now to buy the Galimir Quartet's new Vanguard recording of Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite* and String Quartet, Op. 3 (VA 25017) and, for authenticity of a different kind, buy their coupling of the Ravel and Debussy quartets (Vanguard VA 25009). Felix Galimir worked with both Berg and Ravel, and even if he can't get through difficult first violin parts as easily as he once may have, he's nurtured his younger colleagues until, like him, they play Debussy and Ravel with a taut clarity that's utterly French, and Berg with a shivery vulnerability that, until I heard this new record, I'd have sworn was forever lost. ■

JAZZ BRIEFS

Mal Waldron:
One Entrance, Many Exits
Palo Alto Jazz Records 8014-N

"ONE ENTRANCE, MANY EXITS" is pianist Mal Waldron's personal musical travelogue. Waldron, 57, a New Yorker turned European, has chosen compositions that not only reflect his lifelong influences, but that demonstrate his commitment to seek out new horizons.

The tenor saxophonist for the session is Joe Henderson. In the past, Waldron has worked with horn players John Coltrane, Benny Golson, and Sonny Rollins; when he wants to, Henderson can model himself after any of the three. His playing is brilliant on Irving Berlin's "How Deep Is the Ocean," as it is on Waldron's more modern "Herbal Syndrome," where he calls up shades of Rollins and then Coltrane. On another Waldron original, "Golden Golson," it is obvious to whom Henderson is paying homage.

There is more to this album than the past. Appropriately enough, the title track needs an active listener to appreciate its challenging conversations, its classical elements, and its alternating sparse and dense natures. At one moment Waldron sounds like Thelonious Monk, at another he sounds as complex as Joanne Brackeen. Once, bassist David Friesen engages Waldron in a duet, using his bowing as a haunting, effective communicator. —JONATHAN POSES

Nat Adderley: ***On the Move***
Theresa Records TR117

A FEW YEARS AGO Cannonball Adderley died and the jazz community lost part of its soul. Perhaps the person most affected was his younger brother, Nat, who had been a member of Cannonball's band for fifteen years. He has carried on, playing with and leading several other bands. His latest release, *On the Move,* is especially pleasing.

The record's five compositions—three by Adderley and two by pianist Larry Willis—range from the somber "The Wisdom the Prize" to the briskly moving, bop-oriented "Little Boy With the Sad Eyes" to Adderley's "Naturally," which is influenced by Miles Davis.

Sonny Fortune's alto saxophone is steady throughout the album, and he is at his best during "Wisdom." As always, bassist Walter Booker is impeccable and drummer Jimmy Cobb's cymbal work is enlivening. *On the Move* is honest, straightahead, and in the soulful Adderley tradition. —JONATHAN POSES

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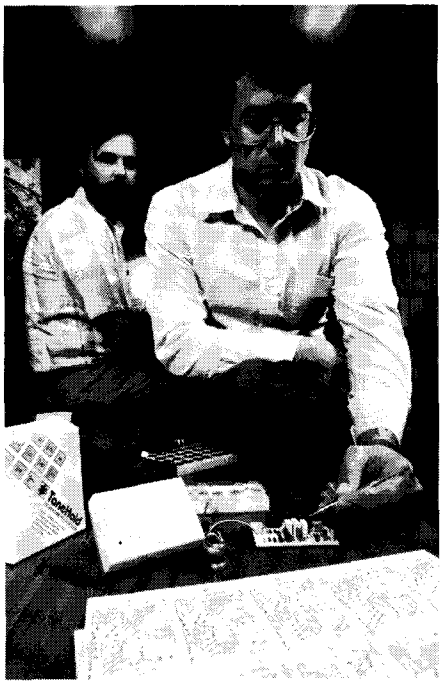

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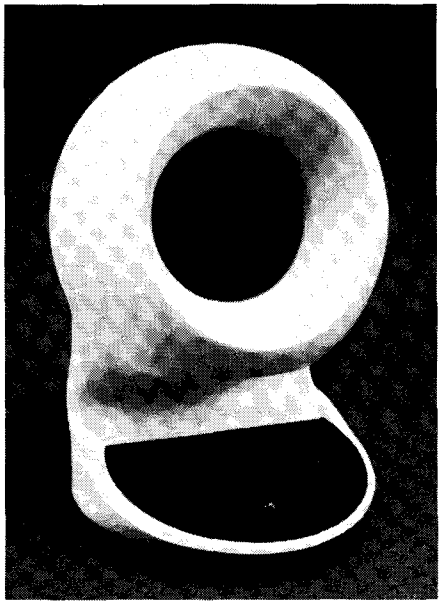

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TRADE WINDS

William Cole

Irish Facts, American Hype

Prize Poet

Galway Kinnell, who recently won a Pulitzer and shared an American Book Award, has just had his *Selected Poems* published in paper by Houghton Mifflin at $6.95. (What a bargain!) Now 56, he has taught at various American universities and at others in France, Iran, and Australia. He's a poet of immense scope: nature, religion, urban life, and children. Like D.H. Lawrence, when he writes about an animal, he becomes the animal. The selection, made by him, runs to the stronger and longer poems, but there are occasional shorter, lighter ones, such as *Daybreak:*

On the tidal mud, just before sunset,
dozens of starfishes
were creeping. It was
as though the mud were a sky
and enormous, imperfect stars
moved across it as slowly
as the actual stars cross heaven.
All at once they stopped,
and as if they had simply
increased their receptivity
to gravity they sank down
into the mud; they faded down
into it and lay still; and by the time
pink of sunset broke across them
they were as invisible
as the true stars at daybreak.

Speaking of Ireland

If all the books about twentieth-century Ireland were laid end to end, they'd stretch from Cork to Belfast. Two beauties just appeared: *A Colder Eye: The Modern Irish Writers* by lively and learned Hugh Kenner (Knopf, $16.95), and *Voices: A Life of Frank O'Connor* by James Matthews (Atheneum, $25). Kenner's "modern" Irish writers are those of the Irish Literary Revival: Yeats, Joyce, Synge, O'Casey, with side glimpes of Beckett, Gogarty, and Flann O'Brien. The treatment is biographical and anecdotal, with emphasis on how these fellows made the English language jump up and holler. He's great on the Irish Fact, "definable as anything they tell you in Ireland, where you get told a great deal." During the recent hoopla surrounding the Joyce Centennial, a plaque was placed on Leopold Bloom's "birthplace"—52 Clanbrassil St. Upper—and a neighbor lady protested that "The Blooms didn't live there at all—they lived down that way." Kenner is the scholar-as-enthusiast, breaking in on himself during a discussion of Ulysses to say, "golly, what a book."

Frank O'Connor was a friend of mine during his New York years, the 1950s. In fact, the fine cover photograph by Elliott Erwitt was taken in my apartment. He was opinionated, flamboyant, handsome, altogether fascinating, with a "voice so low that barnacles clung to it." A master short story teller, a translator from the Irish, a scholar of French literature, he loved Yeats, Chekhov, Mozart, Hugo Wolf, Degas, and, as the author says, "his taste was limited but direct, particularly about what he loved." He would argue the sun out of the heavens about what he didn't love—particularly Joyce. He was born Michael O'Donovan in the Cork slums in 1903, left school at 14, and educated himself, becoming a librarian at 20. His affairs with women were always tangled; he had three children by two wives and one by a non-wife. Never an easy man to get along with, he would break off friendships for real or imaginary reasons. But he was a joy to be around; loved to drink and sing (off-key, but enthusiastically) and intone poetry. He died too young—at 62—in Dublin in 1966.

Then there's *Up in the Park* by Elizabeth Shannon (Atheneum, $14.95). The subtitle tells all: "The Diary of the Wife of the American Ambassador to Ireland 1977-1981," the ambassador being the longtime newspaperman William Shannon. I don't like the phrase, but this is a "woman's book": domestic arrangements at the embassy, where to send the three kids to school, tea parties for the other ambassadorial wives. Mrs. Shannon loved the country and the people, with a few demurs here and there: "the Irish telephone system would curdle a mother's milk, make a nun turn to drink, and drive a saint to grand larceny," and she was discommoded by some fifteen public strikes during their stay. There's a marvelous passage about giving an obligatory dinner for Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Jack Lynch, which turned into a songfest, with The Man Himself rendering a song, then the archbishop, then the president of University College. Mrs. Shannon muses, "I wonder . . . does Mrs. Thatcher have a party piece? Is Indira Gandhi a bundle of laughs?"

He Knew Them All

Anthony Powell (rhymes with *Noel)* comes up with the fourth volume of his memoirs, *The Strangers All Are Gone* (Holt Rinehart & Winston, $18.50), which I assume ends them. This is more or less a scrapbag of people and places encountered since 1952. He knew everybody in London's literary world: Maugham, Kingsley Amis, V.S. Naipaul, Ivy Compton Burnett (accent on the *Bur-,* please), and wild old Augustus John, who "in his latter days found habitual difficulty in remembering, particularly among the young persons present, who were his children, who his grandchildren, who his current girl-friends, who his sons' current girl-friends, who guests

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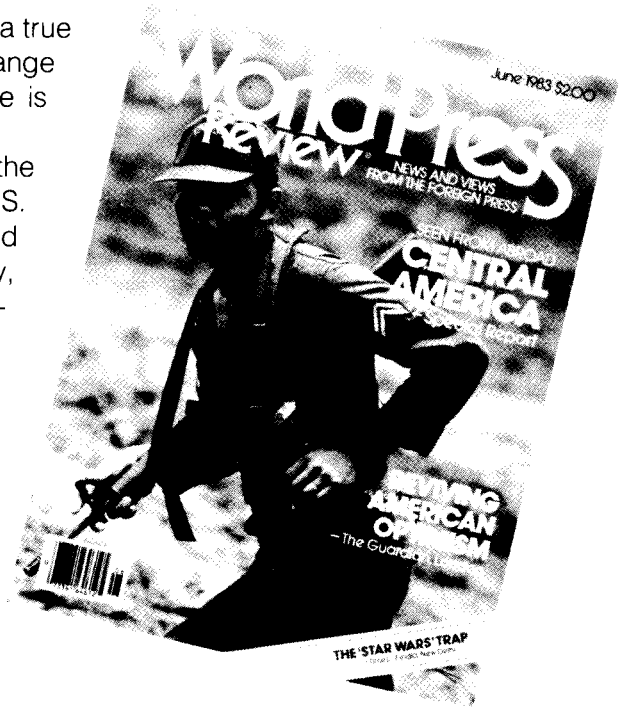

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brought to the house for the first time." I was pleased to re-encounter the story of the peer who, during the Lady Chatterley trial, remarked in the House of Lords "I should not object to my wife or daughter reading the book, but have the strongest objection to it being read by my gamekeeper." I agree with him when he praises D.H. Lawrence's poetry, and disagree when he says that that superb anonymous work of erotica, *My Secret Life*, is "Pedestrian to a degree" and "shows not the smallest literary facility." Mr. Powell is a wee bit on the stuffy side.

Blowup

How could one not dislike a book that comes with recommendations from both Roy Cohn and Andy Warhol? I'm speaking of *Hype* by Steven M.L. Aronson (Morrow, $15.95). Just having two middle initials seems a bit of hype in itself. The word is defined as "The process of inflating careers and reputations—by almost any means." We're in the public relations world, we're with *People* magazine, with makeup artists and make-out artists, with overnight celebrities. To be specific, Cheryl Tiegs, Elaine's restaurant, the advertising campaign for Blackglama mink, plastic surgeons, the gossip columnist Suzy, Barbara Cartland, and the top six public relations men. Never have I read so much about so many people I don't want to know. Oddly, in the middle of all this is a long, and deserved, tribute to the *New York Times* food columnist, Mimi Sheraton, who has nothing whatsoever to do with hype.

Hate Verse

It's odd the way things come in bunches, like Manhattan buses. I'm thinking of hate poems. In 1980 we had *The Oxford Book of Satirical Verse* edited by Geoffrey Grigson; in 1981, *Tygers of Wrath,* subtitled "Poems of Hate, Anger, and Invective," edited by X.J. Kennedy, and now, just out, is *The Devil's Book of Verse* edited by Richard Conniff (Dodd Mead/Everest House, $14.95). So far as I know, there was never before a book of hate poems. Mr. Conniff's is a lively collection: epigrams, epitaphs, parodies, limericks, and proper poems. Catullus is featured, along with Swift, Pope, Ambrose Bierce, Belloc, Samuel Hoffenstein, and those viperous ladies, Phyllis McGinley and Dorothy Parker. Some stuff that's new to me (my primary field is light verse), and some old favorites, such as Hoffenstein's *Question and Answer*, which goes, "What is so rare as a day in June? / Decent behavior / From a popular savior." *Addendum to the Ten Commandments*, an anonymous poem, was new to me:

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife,
Nor the ox her husband brought her;
But thank the Lord you're not forbidden
To covet your neighbor's daughter.

Eatin'

Miriam Ungerer lives out at the tip of Long Island. It's not devoted farming country, but it does have many seasonal wonders, all of which she extols in *Country Food: A Seasonal Journal* (Random House, $16.95). I spend a lot of time out there myself, taking advantage of the summer corn, the late-summer tomatoes, the best bay scallops in the world, and the clams year-round. The author has a way with words, calling a zucchini patch "an invasion of the pods" and, writing about handling live Atlantic blue crabs, which are not pegged like lobsters, "You can, of course, pick them up with long tongs, but then they cling to each other in an unwieldy daisy chain and you find yourself trying to put about a yard of crabs into a pot of boiling water." She talks about how cooking has climbed the social ladder in recent years: "One of the most satisfying changes in American conversation is that people who can't cook no longer brag about it."

A Swatch of Diary

Ned Rorem calls his diary-writing "random and bloody and self-indulgent." Quite so, and let's be grateful. His newest is *Setting the Tone* (Coward McCann, $17.95). There's only a swatch of diary, along with a number of essays on music, sex, travel, and tributes to friends, most of whom seem to have same-sex preferences: Virgil Thomson, Auden, Janet Flanner, Cocteau, Paul Bowles, and Noël Coward, with whom Rorem had a brief affair in Paris. Oh, yes, he's a homosexual, and is perfectly willing to talk about it. He calls himself "queer," not "gay," since the former term was the one he grew up with in Chicago. He's intelligent and observant: "The sole point shared by the wise Susan Sontag and the wiser Gore Vidal is a misconception about their own work. Both rate their fiction above their journalism."

Two earlier books of his diaries—they're all-diary in these cases—are being reissued this July, in one paper volume, *The Paris and New York Diaries,* by that fine new West Coast publisher, North Point Press. They'll follow up in the fall with *The Later Diaries.* ■

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BOOKS

Coming Up Short

The Annunciation
by Ellen Gilchrist, Little, Brown, 384 pp., $14.95
Reviewed by Rosellen Brown

ANDREW KILGORE

Ellen Gilchrist.

ELLEN GILCHRIST is at her best, and worst, when she writes without pity. Her eagerly awaited first novel, *The Annunciation*, is an unevenly compelling book by a talented short story writer who hasn't quite maneuvered the leap from short form to long.

Her Amanda McCamey, "prettiest girl in the Delta," is a type familiar in Southern fiction: she is headstrong and fearless, a modern-day multilingual Scarlett whose updated idol is Zelda Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald, she neglects to notice until too late, never did learn how to be happy. Within a few pages of the opening of her story, Amanda has consummated her childhood love for a cousin and given birth, at 14, to a daughter who will haunt her for the next thirty years. It is clear from page one that Amanda will survive by grit and shamelessness. So she does, rising above genes, memory, and money to try motherhood again in a more receptive, even joyous state of mind. Thus, *The Annunciation* travels from the simplicities of sin to a more complicated and far less interesting accommodation. Three men are sacrificed along the way, but the belle of Issaquena County, none too visibly scarred, prevails.

The first to fall by the wayside is her cousin, Guy, who never recovers from his early passion. Next, to be perverse, Amanda marries a Jew, and won't let anyone in her bigoted New Orleans set forget it. Her husband puts up with her drunken self-contempt but not with her budding intellectual ambition, so she leaves him to attend the University of Arkansas where she pursues a career as a writer and translator. At 40 she finds her own place among the students, hippies, and solid small-towners of Fayetteville. (Gilchrist refers frequently, with obvious delight, to the writers in "Fateville.")

Finally, we are presented with the cataclysmic Christmas Eve sacrifice of the third lover, who in any event has been too good to last. We leave Amanda to a hollowly egotistical, triumphant vision of her children. The abandoned daughter has been reclaimed, and the newborn son is perfect.

Gilchrist exercises her unique voice as a bitter and unforgiving spy among the rich of New Orleans. Those who have read her stories *(In the Land of Dreamy Dreams)* will recognize the territory, and the animus. Gilchrist describes again, effectively, the codes of the class system, and of the religious system as it is distorted by privilege. Here everyone drinks and goes skiing with his secretary; children are perpetually terrified that they won't get into the best schools; and wives work off their power-hunger viciously on the tennis courts. Except for the servants, who are warm and loyal, no one in this set appears to possess a single admirable quality. Nevertheless, Gilchrist pulls Amanda beyond reach of her early nasty prejudices when convenient.

Not that Gilchrist isn't adroit with her skewer. The wife of cousin Guy doesn't need him for much: "She had a rheumatic heart and got her love from doctors." Amanda's own husband married her "to be part of this world he liked to read about in books. He had been a Faulkner scholar at Yale and it had a big effect on his life." It is hard to imagine that Chekhov's St. Petersburg was less of a swamp of hypocritical conformity. Unlike his, Gilchrist's irony is always contemptuous, never sympathetic. Her irony is the witty but uncompassionate, superficially illuminating vision of a writer with a vendetta.

Then, surprisingly, when Amanda moves off to the land of her redemption in Arkansas, it is as if a kind of gratitude for all the tender virtues abroad in the world touches character and author alike, and the book goes soft and uncritical. Gilchrist is like a singer who cannot yet negotiate smoothly the move from lower to upper register: in this case, from darkness to light. When things go

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well for Amanda—as when she remembers where she begins and the cursed McCameys end, and so escapes the narcissistic seductiveness of her family and her past—*The Annunciation* becomes a fairly ordinary story, and its heroine yet another of the bumper crop of lively and admirable women finding themselves. These all wonder if they're good at their work, and whether they dare fall in love; they learn to tell their man to leave them alone when they are working; they decide whether to abort an unplanned pregnancy.

Some nice ironies persist, chief of which is the personality of Amanda's daughter, who has been adopted into that vicious and petty New Orleans affluence. But it is hard to believe the same book accommodates both Amanda's comprehension that she and her cousin are "outside of nature," and far later her speculation about whether she is "in a state of pure ecstasy or plain old-fashioned spring fever or just plain old-fashioned love." When, swimming, she pretends for her lover that she is a porpoise, we are reading the equivalent of the slow-motion-chase-through-long-grass of every movie romance. Whether or not one prefers incest beside the levee to more conventional satisfactions, the problem is not one of originality or plausibility, but of tone. In the second half of the book, the author has put aside all the things that work wonders for her voice: her nervy vigilance, bracing skepticism, and ferocity of judgment.

In the final paragraph, Amanda's complacent victory over loss and pain may not even be meant as ironic. Last paragraphs are, however, a dangerous place to allow such uncertainty. Ellen Gilchrist has let herself and us off the ghastly hook of her characters' obsessions too easily, and for too long, to be able to wriggle the line and get us back on again so hastily. Perhaps her next book, free of the ghosts of old stories, will use her sharp intelligence to better effect. ■

Rosellen Brown is the author of **The Autobiography of My Mother** and **Tender Mercies**. Her new novel, **Civil Wars**, will be published by Alfred A. Knopf.

Precision Versus Passion

Bartleby in Manhattan and Other Essays
by Elizabeth Hardwick, Random House, 279 pp., $13.95
Art and Ardor: Essays
by Cynthia Ozick, Alfred A. Knopf, 310 pp., $16.95
Reviewed by Bruce Allen

HERE ARE NEW gatherings of reviews and essays by two of our most respected writers. The books are not only timely and piquant, they offer considerable instruction in the relative merits of restraint and concision versus loose sweep of argument and passionate, sometimes strident, declamation.

Elizabeth Hardwick's plaintive moralism and lapidary stylistic precision have long since established her as an important commentator on contemporary literature and mores. In volumes of her essays such as *A View of My Own* and *Seduction and Betrayal*, and even in her recent crypto-novel *Sleepless Nights*, she warns that the touchstones of our civilization are being obscured by ephemera, if not eroded away altogether.

Cynthia Ozick's more recent eminence has been earned by her short fiction, collected in *The Pagan Rabbi*, *Bloodshed*, and *Levitation*. These are richly imaginative, abrasive, and funny tales of assorted scholars, ideologues, and God-seekers: dwellers in the quotidian devoted to impossible ambitions and elemental questions. Ozick may well become the next wearer of the mantle of Isaac Bashevis Singer.

In a way, both writers are essentially anachronistic figures. That is why genuine tension and interest attach to their respective considerations of such present cruxes as the claim to literary priority of non-narrative, self-reflective fiction, and the feminist redefinition of various cultural assumptions and standards. Each is a voice crying "Hold, enough!" to forces insisting that all must be changed.

Bartleby in Manhattan consists mainly of pieces that Hardwick wrote for *The New York Review of Books*. They cover political and social issues, literary events and people, and questions of artistic practice. A batch of theater reviews reveals her partiality for classical European drama and her wary scrutiny of "experiments," such as Jerzy Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre and Peter Weiss' documentary play *The Investigation*.

A similar prudence appears in Hardwick's sober evaluations of various new moralities and forms of aesthetics. "Militant Nudes," a portmanteau review of four "radical" movies plus a Marge Piercy novel, is perhaps predictably scornful of the rebelliousness both implicit and explicit in the adoration of rock music and in Warholian cinema. We feel the unarguable force of Hardwick's objection that "something pitiless and pathological has seeped into youth's love of itself, its body, its politics." In "Domestic Manners," on recent social changes, she concludes that "the worst thing that can happen to a nation has happened: we are a people afraid of its youth."

The same regard for standards and

THOMAS VICTOR

Elizabeth Hardwick.

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Cynthia Ozick.

values pervades Hardwick's literary essays. She provides an incisive analysis of Hardy's innovative portrayals of women characters ("Sue and Arabella") and a fascinating, nearly reverential interpretive synopsis of Melville's enigmatic tale "Bartleby the Scrivener." She offers provocative inferences about literary personalities—Ring Lardner, Robert Frost, and Stalin's daughter Svetlana—and develops intriguing arguments from modest premises. In "The Sense of the Present," for instance, she contrasts the well-made, clearly motivated traditional novel with contemporary fiction grounded in absolute relativism, and admits she admires "the honor, the nerve, the ambition" of even Barth and Vonnegut.

The way these essays jump about, pursuing digressive, momentary thoughts whenever they occur, becomes both virtue and defect. One can argue that they're collections of impressions more than they are logically built analyses. Hardwick's use of literary references very occasionally seems forced. Her negative judgments can seem needlessly curt and condescending: in "Sex and the Single Man," her estimation of Christopher Isherwood seems embarrassingly close to what some would call "fag-baiting." Still, Hardwick's essays remain valuable for the lyrical intensity of her random perceptions and summary phrases, and for their classic expression of the saddened humanist sensibility.

Cynthia Ozick is a very different kind of writer. We learn that much from the breezy foreword to *Art and Ardor*, in which she disclaims expertise as an essayist and appears to plead that the following productions be judged not too severely. The essays turn out to be casually organized, sometimes embarrassingly insistent, and filled with rhetorical questions and excited nudgings of the reader. Ozick tends to start things she doesn't finish and to make statements she never quite backs up.

Her aesthetic principles, for example, aren't set in concrete. In "Toward a New Yiddish," she laments the contemporary ignorance of literary and cultural traditions, arguing that a writer's honest acknowledgment of the influences upon his work necessarily precedes his mature artistic expression. She reverses that judgment in "The Lesson of the Master," an amusing confession of her onetime obsessive devotion to Henry James, in which her urgings that the writer must be himself go so far as to proclaim that "influence is perdition."

There's a likable looseness and reach to these outpourings, which do break down into manageable categories. The reviews and literary essays pay homage to such ancestors as Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf, and to contemporary masters Updike and Singer. They challenge writers who seem to have betrayed their talents ("Truman Capote Reconsidered"), or who have examined racial and religious matters in terms Ozick finds unsatisfying: see her curious lambasting of Malamud's novel *The Tenants* in "Literary Blacks and Jews." Her essays on the culture of Judaism and her tributes to its cultural heroes (historian Gershom Scholem, writer-lecturer Maurice Samuel, poet Gertrud Kolmar) are particularly fervent and firm, noting often the "covenantal" and "liturgical" nature of the experience of being a Jew, and reiterating "that there is a cleavage between the noblest social ideals of Western civilization and its attitude toward the Jew."

The essays on feminist issues show Ozick at her fiercest and funniest. Labeling Virginia and Leonard Woolf "A Madwoman and Her Nurse," she observes that the latter's long-suffering, "responsible and conscientious" devotion to the helpless Virginia may have heightened the guilt that drove her to suicide. In "The Hole/Birth Catalogue," she takes issue with the idea that childbearing renders women intellectually different from men; she demolishes Freud's notorious formulation "Anatomy is Destiny." She records her discovery, made while teaching college English courses, that late-adolescent males and females are equally uneducated, and equally unaware of it. She excoriates male chauvinists and radical feminists alike for giving houseroom to the idea that "there is a 'female nature' which is made manifest in all art by women."

A vigorous, uncompromising personality emerges from these pages. After finishing *Art and Ardor* (whose title could not be better), I felt I knew a great deal about Ozick, and was anxious to reread her fiction in the light of this new information.

Many readers may be put off by the tendency to overstatement, and overkill, that makes Ozick's furiously partisan essays so utterly different from Elizabeth Hardwick's reserved, almost stately judgments on our culture and its discontents. I must conclude that Hardwick is the better writer; yet part of me found Ozick's unruly shouts and accusations perversely exhilarating. Whether you're of classical or romantic temperament, you'll find much of interest, and entertainment, in each of these welcome volumes. ■

Hardwick is the better writer, yet part of me found Ozick's unruly shouts and accusations perversely exhilarating.

Bruce Allen is an **SR** contributing editor.

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American Classics

The Library of America (various titles)
Viking Press, $25-$30/volume in bookstores
Time-Life Books, $19.95/volume by subscription
Reviewed by Robert R. Harris

"IT IS ABSURD," Edmund Wilson wrote in the early 1960s, "that our most read and studied writers should not be available in their entirety in any convenient form." What Wilson wanted was something that "would follow the example of the Editions of la Pléiade, which have included so many of the French classics, ancient and modern, in beautifully produced and admirably printed thin-paper volumes, ranging from 800 to 1500 pages." Now that the Library of America has issued its first shelf full of books, I am overjoyed to report that American readers finally are getting what Wilson ordered.

It took a long time. Wilson and some friends tried to get the project off the ground during the 1960s, but were stymied when the newly formed National Endowment for the Humanities chose to back instead the Modern Language Association's plan for editions of American authors to be produced at various universities throughout the country. This decision led to a legendary brouhaha between Wilson and the MLA. Wilson realized that the scholars would get bogged down in textual complexities and that decades would pass before "authorized" texts would be issued. After Wilson's death his fight went on, led, most notably, by Random House editor Jason Epstein. In 1979, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation came up with the grants that launched the Library of America.

The Library issued its first four volumes last spring and now has a dozen available. Each volume contains several of an author's major works in their entirety. Published so far are two of the planned four volumes of both Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne, the first of six volumes of Mark Twain, the first of four volumes of William Dean Howells, two volumes of Jack London, and one volume each of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Walt Whitman. This July, the Library will publish a two-volume edition of Francis Parkman's *France and England in North America*. So, in a little more than a year, superb editions of such American classics as *Moby-Dick*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Call of the Wild*, and *Leaves of Grass* have become available.

The volumes in the Library are magnificently produced. Each is approximately five by eight inches and between 1,000 and 1,500 thin pages; no book is fatter than two inches. The pages are sewn rather than glued. The paper is acid-free and opaque. All of this makes the books light, easy to handle, flexible, and durable—believe it or not, they will last 500 years. In an age in which the shoddiness of manufactured goods, including most books, seems to be the norm, the Library of America editions are an anomaly.

The scholarly accoutrements are kept to a minimum. Each volume contains only a chronology of the author's life, a brief note on the text and, in some cases, a few pages of explanatory notes. The Library has received universal praise from both critics and readers, and the volumes are selling well, often creating a need for a doubling of print-runs.

Indeed, I have difficulty finding fault with this series of classics. Personally, I could have lived without the Harriet Beecher Stowe volume, and one of Jack London would have sated me. Although I'm glad William Dean Howells is included in the Library's plans, I must confess that I doubt I'll reread him; he wrote thirty-five novels, and the Library plans to publish four volumes. I'll take the romanticism of Melville's *Typee* or *Omoo* over Howells' dreary realism any day. But I'm not complaining. The Melville, Hawthorne, Whitman, and Twain volumes are wonderful to savor. It's just that I want to have all the other volumes *now*.

In the fall the Library will publish the collected works of Thomas Jefferson, the first of four volumes of both Henry Adams and Ralph Waldo Emerson, the first of eight of Henry James, and the second of Mark Twain. Next spring will bring Stephen Crane and Edgar Allan Poe. In the fall of 1984, we will get James Fenimore Cooper, Washington Irving, and—the ones I can't wait to get my hands on—two volumes of Henry James' criticism. To follow that the Library promises Emily Dickinson, Henry David Thoreau, Theodore Dreiser, and William Faulkner.

As the Library moves ahead chronologically, one can only hope that the problem of copyright will not be unsolvable and that copyright-holders will see the wisdom of licensing works for inclusion in the Library. Yet it may get sticky. The works of Hemingway and Fitzgerald, for example, sell well in paperback editions. Will the publishers of those books allow their inclusion in the Library of America? Perhaps the Library will be successful enough financially to pay royalties on works that are protected by copyright.

For now, though, we are fortunate to be able to enjoy the rich heritage already issued by the Library. The publication of Francis Parkman's monumental *France and England in North America* is surely this summer's "literary event." The two-volume Library of America edition contains, in Volume I, *Pioneers of France in the New World* (1865, revised 1885), *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century* (1867), *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West* (the 1879 revised version of *The Discovery of the Great West*, 1869), and *The Old Regime in Canada* (1874, revised 1893). Volume II has *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV* (1877), *A Half-Century of Conflict* (two

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volumes, 1892), and *Montcalm and Wolfe* (two volumes, 1894). These works have been available sporadically in expensive reprint editions, but the Library version is the first new edition since 1897-98.

Parkman (1823-93), a descendant of John Cotton, is probably best known for *The Oregon Trail*. But the massive *France and England in North America* (the Library volumes run to more than 3,000 pages) is surely his masterwork. Parkman's achievement appears even more spectacular when we realize that he worked for forty years on this history, all the while suffering from a severe nervous disorder that affected his vision and, at times, limited him to writing only a few lines a day. He relied on others to read to him and to take dictation, and he invented a wire-framed device that enabled him to write without having to look at his manuscript.

Although Parkman thought of his history as one work, each of the volumes stands alone. In fact, the reader can pick up these two Library editions and begin at just about any chapter. It does not take long to get hooked. Parkman combined a romantic outlook with the tools of scholarship, and the result is history as literature. Historians have judged him accurate, but above all he was a marvelous writer whose depictions of nature and of fierce battles are vivid and dramatic. Parkman saw the struggle for dominance in North America as the defeat of a reactionary force, France, by the force of progress, England. In the introduction to the first volume he sets forth his thesis: "Liberty and Absolutism, New England and New France. The one was the offspring of a triumphant government; the other, of an oppressed and fugitive people; the one, an unflinching champion of the Roman Catholic reaction; the other, a vanguard of the Reform. Each followed its natural laws of growth, and each came to its natural result." His bias notwithstanding, Parkman detailed that course of events from the early voyages of discovery up through the French and Indian Wars, which concluded on the Plains of Abraham, when the English under Gen. James Wolfe defeated the French under Gen. Louis Joseph Montcalm and captured Quebec.

The effort and skill that have gone into the making of the Library of America are impressive. Almost assuredly it is the most significant literary project to be undertaken in our lifetime. ■

Robert R. Harris is an SR contributing editor.

BOOK BRIEFS

Fisher's Hornpipe
by Todd McEwen
Harper & Row, 256 pp., $12.95

McEWEN LEAVES YOU breathless. *Fisher's Hornpipe* is a fast-paced and pitilessly funny first novel, flawed but sparkling. His hero, William Fisher, is no hero at all. He's an Ordinary Guy, a young American male who's fed up with his work life, his sex life, and the bad dream that life in America has become. Fisher models himself on Thoreau: "Simplify!" he shouts, as he throws his furniture out the window of his Boston apartment. Walking on the ice of Walden Pond as the novel opens, Fisher slips and strikes his head. He wakes up, nurses his wound, and determines to win his revenge against the world.

Bostonians and their decaying patrician habitat are the chief targets of Fisher's ire. He goes on a hilarious drunken spree at the Harvard Club with Crosbee McWilliams III, a rich young Brahmin with a "hueless flabelliform body" and "molelike hair." He sets fire to a library book to gain the attentions of Miss Alison Mapes, a slow-witted beauty who seems to have been lifted directly from the pages of *The Preppie Handbook*. Then he runs into his savior, Fred-from-Oregon, a good-natured, drunken drifter who speaks more sense than anyone Fisher has ever met. The novel climaxes when Fisher reads Fred-from-Oregon's populist "manifesto" before an assembled crowd of bums at Boston's chic Quincy Market, provoking a riot.

McEwen is a social satirist, with a constitutional dislike for trendiness and a deadly ear for cant. I have trouble remembering another first novel that made me giggle as often. If the narrative structure is a bit impromptu, if moral complexity is too often sacrificed for an easy laugh, *Fisher's Hornpipe* is nevertheless a most promising debut.

—ADAM GUSSOW

Defects of the Heart
by Barbara Gordon
Harper & Row, 324 pp., $14.95

BARBARA GORDON, an award-winning documentary filmmaker who described her bout with Valium addiction in her autobiography, *I'm Dancing as Fast as I Can*, has written a novel about another award-winning documentary filmmaker obsessed with a drug. The fictional drug, Styralon, which has been developed to prevent miscarriages, has been approved by the FDA despite proof that it causes fetal deformities, including "defects of the heart." Jessica Lenhart, a renowned crusader for the rights of the underprivileged, teams up with a reformed corporate lawyer to expose the underhanded tactics of the conglomerate that makes Styralon. As she invades people's lives to capture their pain on film, Jessica's focus shifts from the victims of Styralon to the defect of her own heart, her incapacity to love. She realizes also the exploitative nature of her business, which thrives on the very suffering it attempts to allay and manipulates emotions just as the drug company distorts laboratory reports.

Ironically, while this story condemns the slickness of television and its lack of conscience, it exhibits the same major flaws. Jessica is no more complex than the heroine in an average TV drama: the efficient, capable career woman afraid of the disorder of love. We are seldom allowed into Jessica's mind, but must depend on facile visual clues, such as a mysterious smile or a dark cloud overhead, to gauge her moods. The dialogue often reads like a television advertisement—sometimes clever, sometimes serious, but always calculated for effect. After seeing Jessica's film, the born-again public interest lawyer is "moved, outraged, and finally overwhelmed by the humanity, the feeling, of the film." Gordon tries too obviously to evoke this reaction in us, and succeeds only in excising the heart of this book.

—CAROL VERDERESE

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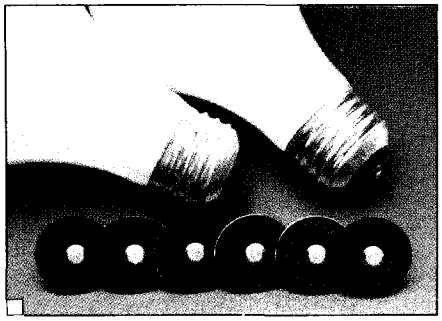

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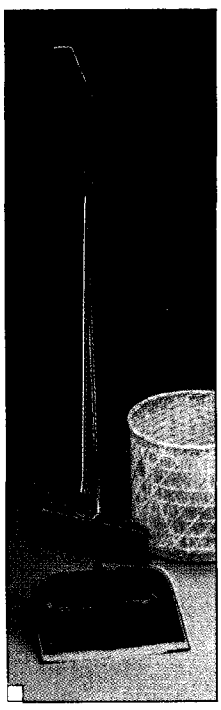

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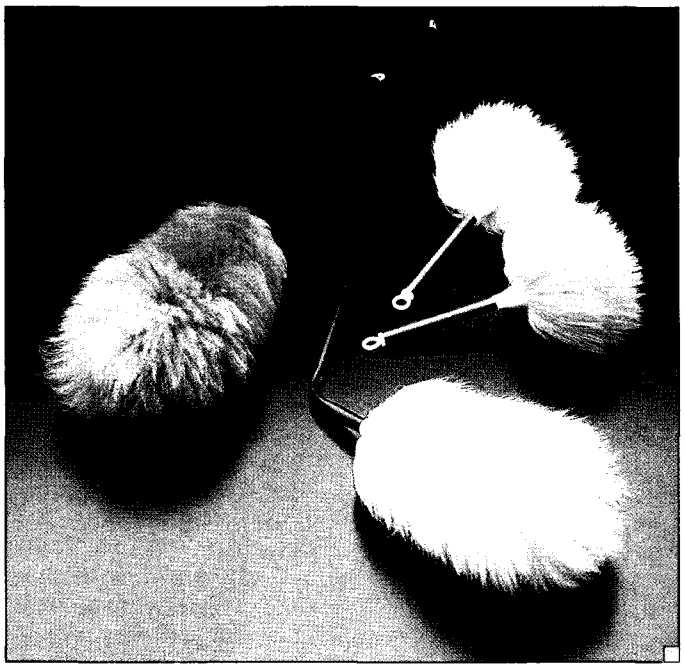
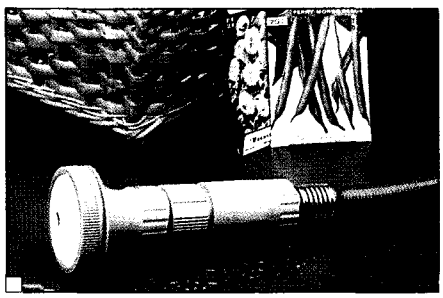
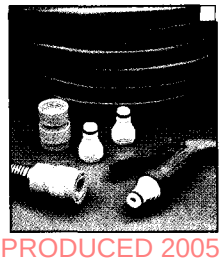


☐ If we ever compile a book on *The Old Ways That Were Better Ways,* we will certainly include a chapter on lambswool dusters. On its own lambswool actually attracts and holds dust like a magnet. The static charge in the wool causes dust literally to leap off surfaces where it has accumulated, making these dusters just the thing for dusting bric-a-brac, china, crystal, pictures and other fragile items. Recently we were introduced to two exciting new versions of our old time favorite, the mini-duster and the bent-handled duster. The standard 27″ long duster costs **$7.00** ($1.95) #A780; the bent-handled model is **$8.00** ($1.95) #A781; two mini-dusters cost **$8.00** ($1.95) #A794. We can send you the entire group, a total of four dusters, for just **$16.00** ($2.95) #A783.

GARDEN HOSE ACCESSORIES



☐ The biggest problem with most hoze nozzles is getting and maintaining the desired water flow. The answer is Nozzle Five. This hose nozzle lets you set water flow to any of five positions. Use the shower setting for heavy watering or car washing, gentle shower for potted plants or window boxes, flat spray for misting foliage and the jet stream for force cleaning patios, decks and gutters. The fifth setting is a convenient stop action. Nozzle Five is made of noncorrosive plastic and costs **$11.00** ($1.95) #A481. Two for **$18.00** ($2.95) #A4812. For fast, dripless connections between hose and accessories we offer Barco quick snap connectors, shown below. They work on the same principle as the snap connectors on pneumatic tools in a garage. They permit you to connect two lengths of hose or add accessories without first turning off the water. No threading required, just snap the male and female connectors together. Waterflow shuts off automatically when disconnected. A set of five snap connector pieces (2 female and 3 male—enough so you can switch accessories at hose end) costs just **$8.00** ($1.95) #A843.



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☐ Simple Green is an oven cleaner. Bathroom cleaner. Window cleaner. Floor cleaner. Stain remover. Laundry presoak. Upholstery cleaner. Rug cleaner. Leather and vinyl cleaner. Simple Green is non-abrasive, non-caustic, low-phosphate and biodegradable. It has no bleach, ammonia or petroleum. It is approved by U.S.D.A. This industrial strength cleaner is used in restaurants, car washes, hospitals, airlines and oil rigs. Technically, Simple Green is a blend of synthetic penetrants that emulsify and suspend oil for cold-water rinse. It can be used on anything you use cold water on. We can send two 16 oz. spray bottles of Simple Green for **$9.00** ($2.95) #A698; two 16 oz. bottles plus a natural ocean sponge for **$12.00** ($2.95) #A828 or one gallon plus an ocean sponge for **$21.00** ($3.95) #A827.

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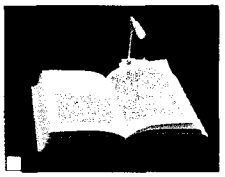
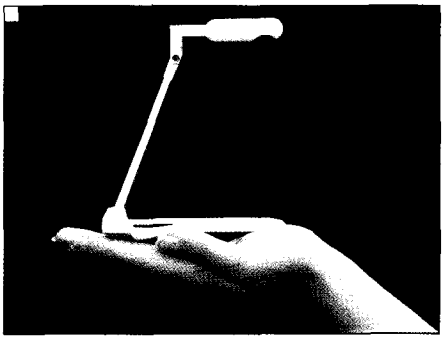
TOOLS FOR LIVING®

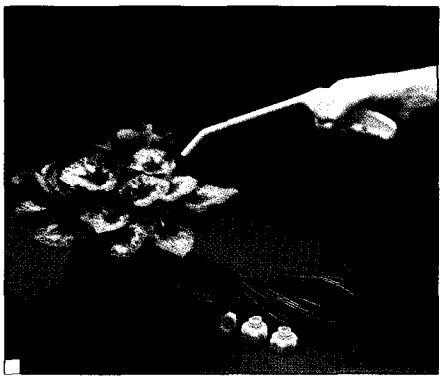
BOOK LIGHT



☐ Here's a new tool just on the market that will brighten the life of any bookreader. It is a light that clips on the book or magazine you are reading, flooding the open pages with a cool strong light ideal for reading. The light weighs just a bit over 2 oz. and is attentively crafted with two swivel joints and a special distortion free lead crystal optical bulb. The Booklight comes with a battery pack (batteries not included), AC adapter, 8′ cord and spare bulb in a box that looks like a book. **$29.00** ($3.95) #A685. Backed by one-year limited warranty.



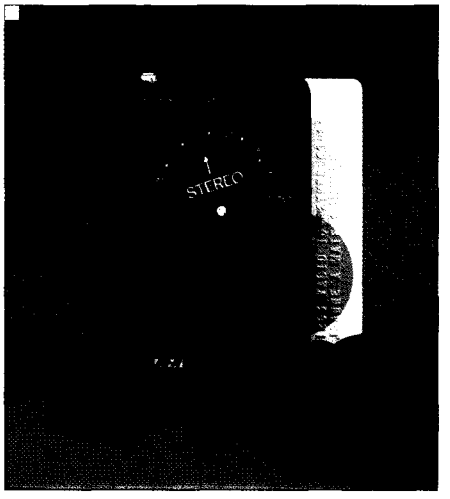
WATERING WHIZ



☐ Do your houseplants run you ragged, back and forth, trip after trip, watering can in hand? There is an easier way: with an indoor garden hose you can water them all in a single trip. This 50′ vinyl hose comes complete with a set of four adaptors that readily attach to most indoor and outdoor faucets. From there you just take the water where you want it, an easy-control handle allows you to turn a splashless stream of water on and off as needed. This indoor hose comes with a snap-in misting attachment, so after you water the roots you can spray the foliage. It costs just **$11.00** ($1.95) #A681, two for **$19.00** ($2.95) #A6812.

SHIRTPOCKET STEREO

☐ The electronics of everyday life continue to shrink at a rate to surprise even Alice in Wonderland. The latest bit of evidence is an FM tuner the size of a credit card, so small it slips right into a shirt or vest pocket. It weighs all of 3 oz., earphones included, and is ½″ thick. It performs like a tuner many times its size and will fill your head with clean-cut full-bodied sound. The specs tell the story: Frequency response from 330–15000 Hz. Under 1% total harmonic distortion. 30 milliwatts per channel. Sensitivity 15db. Full band width frequency range 88-108 MHz. State-of-the-art circuitry. Padded microearphones with samarium-cobalt magnets and 46″ cord fit comfortably inside the ear. On/Off switch. Volume control. LED stereo indicator. The radio is powered by 2 AAA batteries (not included). It comes in a simulated leather drawstring pouch for only **$27.00** ($2.95) #A755. In keeping with pocket-size components are our deluxe folding headphones, not shown. Two quick twists and they fold down to fit into a cassette-size box. They plug directly into our Shirtpocket Stereo or any personal stereo. They cost **$11.00** ($2.95) #A860.



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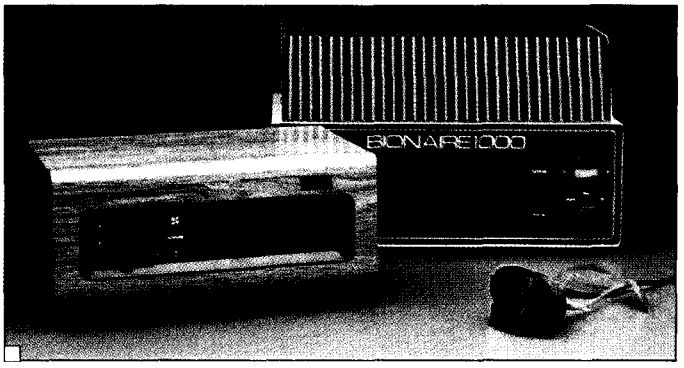
☐ Air pollution doesn't politely stop at the front door—it follows you right inside. The Bionaire 500 is like moving a mountain breeze indoors. It removes 99% of all particulate pollutants from the air—goodbye to soot, dust, animal dander, pollen, cigarette smoke, smog, molds and fungi. The newly developed electret filter removes particles as small as 1/10,000 the thickness of a human hair The Bionaire 500 cleans 45 cubic feet of air a minute, the average room three times an hour. It includes a switchable ion generator—negative ions are well known for their presumed psychological good effects, creating a sense of well-being such as comes from standing next to a waterfall. A switchable fragrance dispenser allows you to add a fresh scent to the air when you wish. The Bionaire 500 measures 11″×7″×5″, uses only 45 watts energy, comes in a smoothly styled hard plastic case with woodgrain finish. The Bionaire 500 costs **$125.00** ($9.95) #A822. A larger model 1000 has three speeds instead of two and cleans 118 CFM of air—enough to empty the smoke from a closed conference room faster than any competing unit This unit measures 14″×8″×8½″ with a lifetime steel housing. The Bionaire 1000 costs **$275.00** ($12.95) #A823. Both models are UL-listed and carry 1-year limited warranties.



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Waiting for an Army to Die: The Tragedy of Agent Orange
by Fred A. Wilcox
Random House
256 pp., $15.95 cloth/$6.95 paper

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to read this book without feeling outrage and despair, for the story of Agent Orange is a tragedy that affects not only Vietnam veterans, but all Americans and their offspring. Between the years 1962 and 1970, the United States military dropped 11.2 million gallons of the herbicide Agent Orange on Vietnam to defoliate jungles and destroy the enemy's food supply. The defoliant contained TCDD-Dioxin, the most toxic substance made by man. American forces, if not sprayed directly, often inhabited sprayed areas for weeks and months at a time, unwittingly drinking and bathing in contaminated water.

More than a decade later, a significant number of Vietnam veterans experienced strange medical problems usually associated with old age. When they told the Veterans Administration of their many deformed children, rare cancers, severe skin rashes, and liver failure, their complaints were dismissed as symptoms of "war neurosis." When these veterans began to organize to demand a recognition of the problem and further study, they were confronted with a host of bureaucratic obstacles, compounded by alleged collusion between chemical companies and various government agencies. Their lawsuit against five major chemical companies and the VA is pending. Wilcox argues persuasively that the outcome will spell victory or defeat for the American people because, as illustrated in Times Beach, Missouri, in Alsea, Oregon, and in many other contaminated sites across the country, "we are all Vietnamese to the chemical companies, who feel their annual profits are more important than the health of human beings."

—CAROL VERDERESE

A Journey in Ladakh
by Andrew Harvey
Houghton Mifflin, 256 pp., $13.95

WESTERNERS' ACCOUNTS of the exotic East go back to the thirteenth century when Marco Polo regaled his fellow Venetians with tales of China. To judge from Peter Matthiessen's *The Snow Leopard*, and now British poet Harvey's *A Journey in Ladakh*, the East still holds its lure, especially for those in search of an all-encompassing spiritual life. The question that arises is whether Westerners can follow an Eastern philosophy without either falsifying it or betraying themselves.

Harvey addresses this issue throughout his travels in Ladakh, a remote region in the Himalayas of North India that holds one of the last Tibetan Buddhist societies. Through vivid observations of the natural world, in thoughtful conversations with fellow travelers, Ladakhi friends, and Buddhist monks, and through visits to many of the most famous mountain monasteries, Harvey explores the underpinnings of Buddhist thought, with all its ambiguities. Though he conveys his wonder and enthusiasm for the teachings of the great Buddhist spiritual leaders, he avoids being patronizing or, worse, falling prey to the illusion that the answers to the strife and terror of our industrial society can be found in a fragile, rural culture like Ladakh, which has been protected from the outside world for centuries. Though wary of those truth-seekers who reject the materialism of the West, or who come to the East to have their "egos healed," Harvey does believe it is possible to fuse the dynamic intuitions of Western philosophy and science with the transcendental insights of the East. This dialogue between East and West, he argues, is a necessity if the world is to survive.

—ANDREA BARNET

Against Straight Lines: Alone in Labrador
by Robert Perkins
Atlantic Monthly Press
208 pp., $15.95

IN THE SUMMER OF 1979, Perkins left his job in a Boston library and headed north. His destination was the Palmer River in upper Labrador. There, with a five-week supply of food, a handmade wooden canoe named Monkey, and a plastic pink flamingo—"something for the lawn"—he set off into the Canadian wilderness. "This landscape is an eternal dream," he writes, "or awake in a way I hardly perceive."

Perkins is a poet by temperament and a watercolorist by avocation. His thoughtful eyes are what make this book work. He drifts down the rock-sloped Palmer Valley and portages through the "soft, undulating world" of an alpine meadow. Impressions accumulate, taut and pure as haiku: a paper-white moon in a Prussian-blue sky; boiling water pouring over the rock lip of a waterfall.

—ADAM GUSSOW

A Bitter Fog: Herbicides and Human Rights
by Carol Van Strum
Sierra Club Books, 320 pp., $14.95

THE CITIZEN MOVEMENTS against nuclear power and toxic chemicals have followed parallel courses. In each case, activists who initially were prompted by visceral fear of poisoning have educated themselves in fields once the province of experts. As a result, protests often have grown into criticisms of our economic system and of our scientific mentality, both of which have created a reliance on these technologies.

Van Strum chronicles this growth in *A Bitter Fog*, the first comprehensive survey of the politics of herbicides. Moreover, she typifies that growth. Van Strum began to protest the use of herbicides in the forests of coastal Oregon when her children became ill after accidentally being sprayed. She helped to found the Oregon-based Citizens Against Toxic Sprays, which was the vanguard of what is now a growing national movement. Now, nearly a decade later, she has delivered a thoroughly researched book that is both analytic and impassioned.

Necessarily, doubts arise about the validity of the circumstantial evidence that Van Strum and other anti-herbicide activists have gathered. Van Strum confronts that doubt by demanding, "How much circumstantial evidence is enough?" She complains that scientific method cannot be precisely applied to the larger world, where human beings are subjected to the real but unmeasurable effects of everything from radiation to food additives to acid rain. When human beings are the guinea pigs, Van Strum asks, how long can regulation be held hostage to a purity of scientific method which rejects even the most overwhelming of circumstantial evidence? *A Bitter Fog* brings well-documented case histories to bear on that question.

—PHILLIP JOHNSON

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DIVERSIONS

Competition No. 36

The dialogue on the afternoon soaps gives us the pip. Not that we ever watch the silly things, but it *would* give us the pip if we *did* watch them. We realize that it must be agony to grind out that stuff by the yard, and that the actors are clearly winging it half the time; but still, does it have to be that flat? Imagine *All My Children, As the Hospital Turns*, etc., as they might be if improved by T.S. Eliot, Noël Coward, Tennessee Williams, Bernard Shaw, Harold Pinter, Dylan Thomas, Eugene O'Neill, or the Playwright of Your Choice. And if you must choose between brevity and wit, choose brevity.

Entries for Competition No. 36 must be received by July 31 and the winners will be announced in the September-October issue. Send submissions to *SR* Competition No. 36, *Saturday Review*, Box 704, Kingston, NJ 08528. Entries become the property of *SR*.

Winners of No. 35

The fat mailbags produced by the first contest in our new series so taxed the resources of the Kingston P.O. that we tried to make this one a little tougher, hoping to free Mrs. Petrillo for more important business, like getting out the utility bills. We must have overdone it, for there were not many of you who felt up to the job of imitating E.B. White. Why this timid response? Ignorant of the real answer, we resort as usual to plausibilities. Probably most people agreed with Matthew Rodermund of Medford, New Jersey: "Who can really emulate E.B. White's style? If any of us could, you would have heard of him by now." (Read on, Rodermund! A few people came close, which is all that one can ask.)

What surprised us most of all was the somber tone of the entries. Our man is no doubt capable of the elegiac and the monitory note, but does one recall his surreal humor? He is the author, after all, of such sublimely inconsequent sentences as "Let a man's leg be never so shapely, sooner or later his garters wear out."

FIRST PRIZE goes to Hamilton Paper of Honolulu, who deserves some special award for being able to think in the New England mode on the beach at Waikiki:

> A week ago Fred had a disagreement with the white-faced steer and the steer summarized his argument by stepping on the dachshund's foot. Immobilized by the splint, Fred has spent some five days nursing his real wound—the affront to his manhood—in a wood box near the stove. But while recovering he has savored the two things in life that he prizes above all others—almost constant human attention and an unbelievable array of his favorite foods. I like to hope that most disabilities have some such compensating advantage. Pregnancy must be an awful nuisance, but a young woman heavy with child and intent on crossing the road can bring a convoy of Sherman tanks to a shuddering halt. I also sympathize with the evident pain of the man who hangs fire on certain speech sounds, but stuttering can be a powerful spur to synonymy. The stutterer who foresees the barrier of the *b* in *beans* can switch the phrase to "spill the legumes!" and gain thereby a little local celebrity for wit.

SECOND PRIZE to Louella Morley of Toronto, not only for suggesting the master's style but also for maintaining, at what cost we do not know, his innocently unreconstructed male point of view:

> I believe that there are times in a man's life when he is more naturally honest and trustworthy than at other times. Anyone past the age of 80 has my confidence. By then a man is too tired to date a letter earlier than he wrote it or to feign an emotion he doesn't feel. I also trust any young man who has more than one child under the age of 6. Having several small children does obvious things to their mother, all the way from her tennis serve to her laundry schedule, but the effect on the father is principally that of intensifying his moral nature. The long, long thoughts of youth are as nothing compared to the immense meditations of the man who contemplates, with mingled happiness and terror, the several futures into which he has divided himself, and a responsible attitude toward the future is the foundation of morality. Convince me that you have two preschoolers at home, and you may borrow my 1946 edition of *Krazy Kat*.

THIRD PRIZE to Annabelle Quick of San Antonio, Texas, a Constant Contributor, who allows us to end, albeit with a whiff of Andy Rooney, on a note of Whitean levity:

> Each time I have at an "easy-open" package—the kind that invites me to "press firmly here" or "cut along the dotted line" or "peel apart here"—I am the more convinced that there would be fewer frayed tempers, less dry cereal on the floor, less dishwasher detergent in the sink and less flour on the kitchen counter if packagers would only contemplate the egg and the banana.

Ms. Quick adds, at the bottom of her submission, "I hope your postmistress survives this competition." Believe us, she will survive. And could we have no more little notes of sympathy that bypass us and go directly to her? Do you realize how humiliating it is for the editor of an *important national competition* to have to sit there and listen to that sort of thing? With or without the coffee and brownies? One little remembrance at Christmastime seems to us quite sufficient.

Puzzles

Literary Crypt No. 181

ORB BUFF BIG LUNG UX SQUOD UO BIG DNYBG, FRRE AG LRN YOQ EUOXIUM AUBI BIG XBYNX. —D. TGNGSUBI

Wit Twister No. 193

Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ wind blows
day by torrid day,
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ petty signs of
man's endeavor.
Where kings and their
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ held brief
sway,
The desert land _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
its rule forever.

—Mrs. Thomas E. Harris
Alexandria, Virginia

May-June Answers

Literary Crypt No. 180

There was so much handwriting on the wall that even the wall fell down.
—C. Morley

Wit Twister No. 192

rickets, sticker, tickers

Tunick Double-Crostic No. 2

H.L. Mencken: *Minority Report*

"There are some people who read too much—the *bibliobibuli*. I know some who are constantly drunk on books as other men are drunk on whiskey or religion. They wander through this most diverting and stimulating of worlds in a haze, seeing nothing and hearing nothing."

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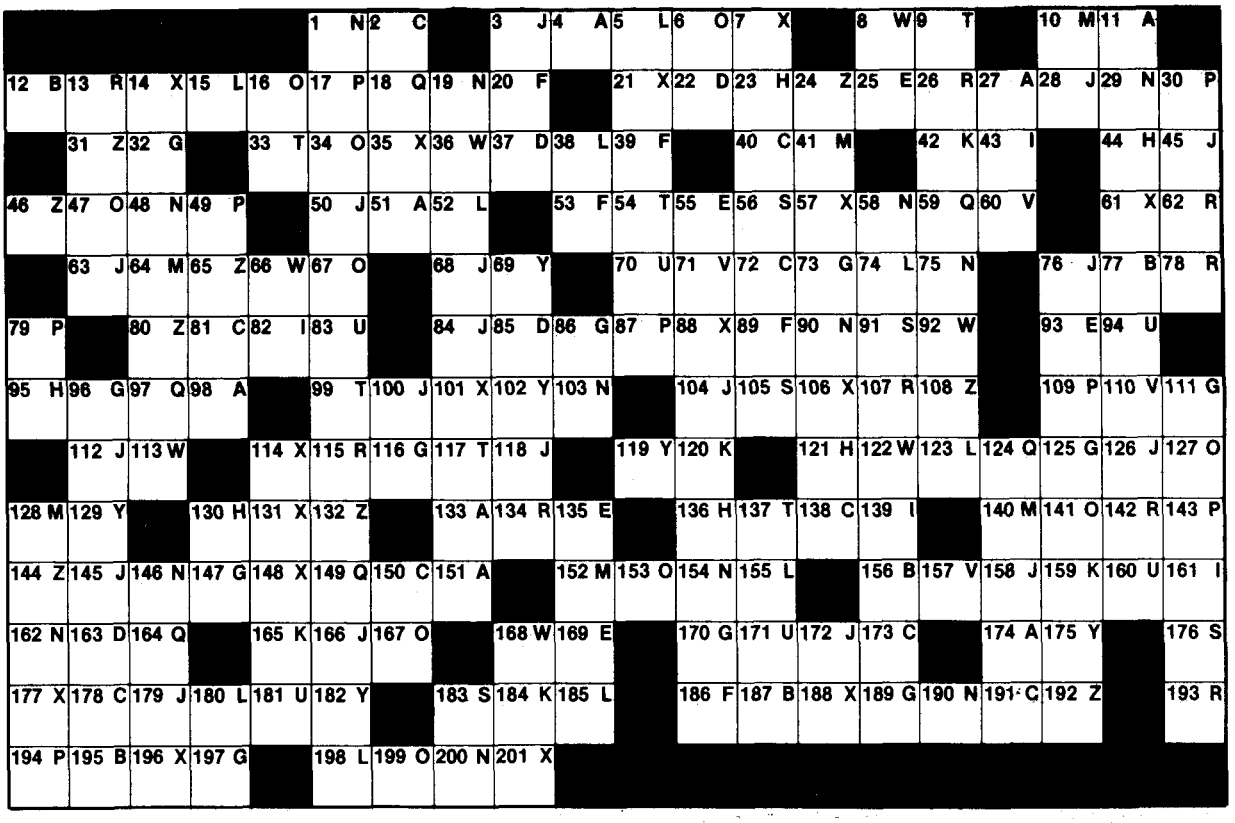

TUNICK DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 3

The letters of the clue answers (below) spell a quotation when put in the numbered squares (above). Reading down, the first letters of the clue answers spell the name of the quotation's author and the title of the work.

CLUES	ANSWERS
A. His name is practically a Washington institution	11 98 27 133 4 151 174 51
B. Belgian town near French border	187 12 77 195 156
C. Birnam Wood's destination, in Macbeth	173 81 72 138 40 2 191 178 150
D. Invalid	163 37 85 22
E. Impede legally	135 55 93 169 25
F. Stadium cheers	20 39 53 186 89
G. Old marriage ceremony	197 96 147 111 170 86 116 125 189 32 73
H. Permits	130 23 136 121 95 44
I. Hie; dash	82 161 43 139
J. Where the action was in *Casablanca* (3 wds., 2 Fr.)	126 68 28 179 3 104 50 76 118 166 45 100 145 112 63 84 158 172
K. *Agenbite of* ··· (14th-c. book quoted by J. Joyce)	42 159 165 184 120
L. Separated according to status	185 155 38 5 123 180 15 198 74 52
M. Fit as a fiddle (hyph.)	41 10 128 152 64 140

CLUES	ANSWERS
N. Dry Italian cottage cheese (2 wds.)	162 1 190 58 90 200 146 75 154 19 103 48 29
O. Heaviside layer locale	127 141 199 47 167 6 153 34 67 16
P. Creamy sauce named after Louis XIV's steward	87 143 17 49 109 79 194 30
Q. Expresses; divulges	59 149 18 164 97 124
R. Hotspur's home (British football)	26 78 107 193 13 62 134 115 142
S. Distinguishing character or moral nature	91 56 183 105 176
T. Pooh-pooh; pish-tush (hyph.)	9 137 33 99 54 117
U. Moon of Uranus	171 160 83 70 94 181
V. Barley beards	71 157 110 60
W. ··· oxide (aerosol component)	113 8 36 92 66 122 168
X. Outside a government's jurisdiction	7 35 196 188 88 106 21 57 14 177 114 201 101 61 148 131
Y. Cons; scams	182 102 119 175 69 129
Z. 1915-16 battle scene	144 108 192 65 24 80 46 132 31

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AFTERTHOUGHTS

Bruce VanWyngarden

"Not of the letter . . ."

The postcard has been tacked to the bulletin board above my office desk for more than three years. "Greetings from Nebraska City, Nebraska," it reads, the red script floating in the sky above a stately brick building. It is a curious picture. Although the grass surrounding the building is green, Christmas decorations are still (or already) in place. A Nativity scene ornaments the lawn. Across the street, a 1959 Plymouth is parked under a sign that reads:

Ehmke's Tavern
Beer-Sandwiches

The reverse side of the card informs us that the Otoe County Courthouse is "a popular tourist attraction" and "the oldest public office building in the state still in use."

Not to denigrate Nebraska City or its courthouse, but I do not keep the postcard to remind me of their charms. I keep the card because it reminds me that, no matter how omnipresent the demands of career, house payments, and the like may seem, we all have the capacity to change the rules if we want to. The card was sent to me by a friend and coworker who had decided to do just that.

During one of our canoe float-trips in Missouri's Ozark Mountains, Bill had told me of his long-held desire to float the length of the Missouri River in a canoe. It sounded like a wonderful fantasy to me, and it made for great conversation as we drifted through the wilderness. It wasn't until one Sunday a few weeks later, when he called and asked me to take a "trial" twenty-mile float on the Missouri near Columbia, that I began to understand the seriousness of his intent.

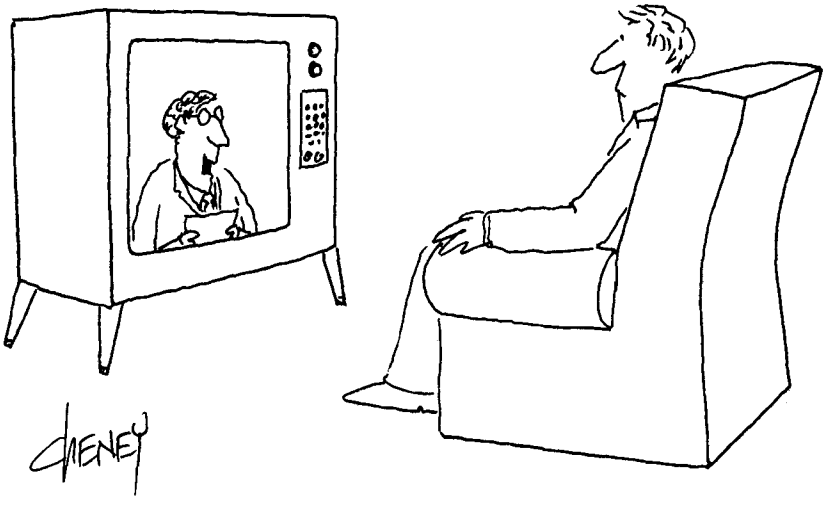
The trial went very well. We discovered there isn't very much work involved in floating the Missouri River in a canoe. Once we were in the current, our only concerns were keeping the bow headed downstream and avoiding any other floating objects. Never was the Seventies catch-phrase "go with the flow" more appropriate. The scenery was lovely—high bluffs on one side, and forests, farmland, and railroad tracks on the other. With the swift current, the twenty miles passed quickly. Later, as we drove home, it was obvious Bill's odyssey was no longer a matter of *if*, but merely a question of *when*.

Soon thereafter, he and a fellow dreamer loaded their sail-rigged, seventeen-foot canoe on top of a newly purchased wreck of a car that was intended to carry them to their destination and no farther. Within two weeks, word filtered back from Montana that they were on the river. It was not until several weeks later that the card arrived. I was working at a newspaper then, and the card was tossed on my desk one afternoon amid the hubbub of the daily deadline. It read, "Ready for some Ozark streams, fast, cold, clear. Enjoying life. Taking my time. Bill."

The cool serenity of that message was so unforced, so obviously genuine, that the furious activity surrounding me seemed somehow less than real. I leaned back, closed my eyes, and was transported to the Missouri River, somewhere south of Nebraska City (wherever that was). I felt the sun beating off the towering bluffs onto my weathered skin. My canoe rocked in the current. Above, a hawk rode the wind to dizzying heights. . . .

My reverie was brief, deadline was met, and I still have not pursued an adventure much beyond the limits imposed by job, family, and vacation time. But that postcard has become a personal icon, and I've looked up Nebraska City on the map. Someday I intend to go there and walk among the tourists and office workers in the halls of the Otoe County Courthouse.

Afterwards, I'll probably go on over to Ehmke's and try one of their Beer-Sandwiches. ■



"And now, stay tuned for the best of Dan Rather."

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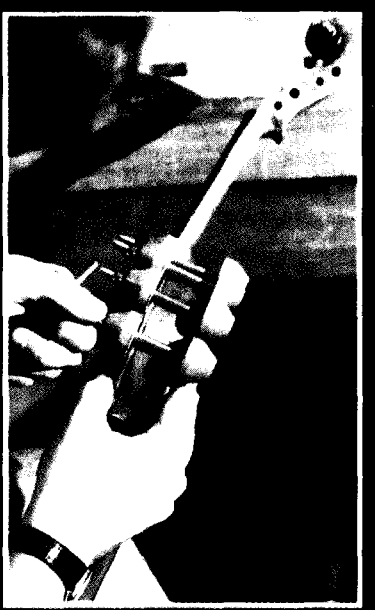
EXPERIENCE THE EXCELLENCE OF ARTS.

Old World Elegance and New World Ballet are part of the cable television excitement for July on arts.

FIRST EDITION. Book critics Nancy Evans and John Leonard talk with authors about their books and ideas in this fast paced literary show. **Every Friday, 11:25PM**

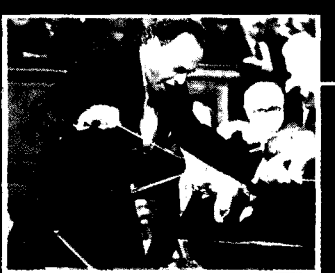


HANDMADE IN AMERICA. Jacques Francais and his New York violin restoration shop are featured in a series on American craftspeople, with interviewer Barbaralee Diamonstein. **Thursday, July 7, 11:00 PM**

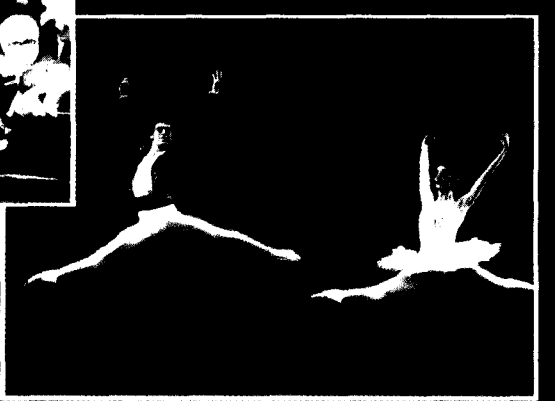
THE ARTIST WAS A WOMAN. The lives and works of the world's greatest female artists from 1550 to 1950. Included are Mary Cassatt, Georgia O'Keeffe and Kathe Kollwitz. **Friday, July 8, 9 PM**

PETER GRIMES. Canadian tenor Jon Vickers stars as Peter Grimes in Benjamin Britten's celebrated opera about an outcast fisherman wrongly accused of murder. **Monday, July 18, 9 PM**

LA BELLE EPOQUE. A look at Europe and America from 1890 to 1914 when the arts flourished and high society dined and dressed lavishly. **Wednesday, July 20, 9 PM**



BEETHOVEN'S NINTH SYMPHONY AND EGMONT OVERTURE. Lorin Maazel conducts the French National Orchestra in a performance taped at the Theatre des Champs Elysees in Paris. **Saturday, July 23, 9 PM**



NEW WORLD BALLET. The debut of the New World Ballet Company in association with the 1982 New World Festival of the arts. Includes solo performances by dancers Fernando Bujones and Cynthia Gregory. **Saturday, July 30, 10:05 PM**

Hearst/ABC
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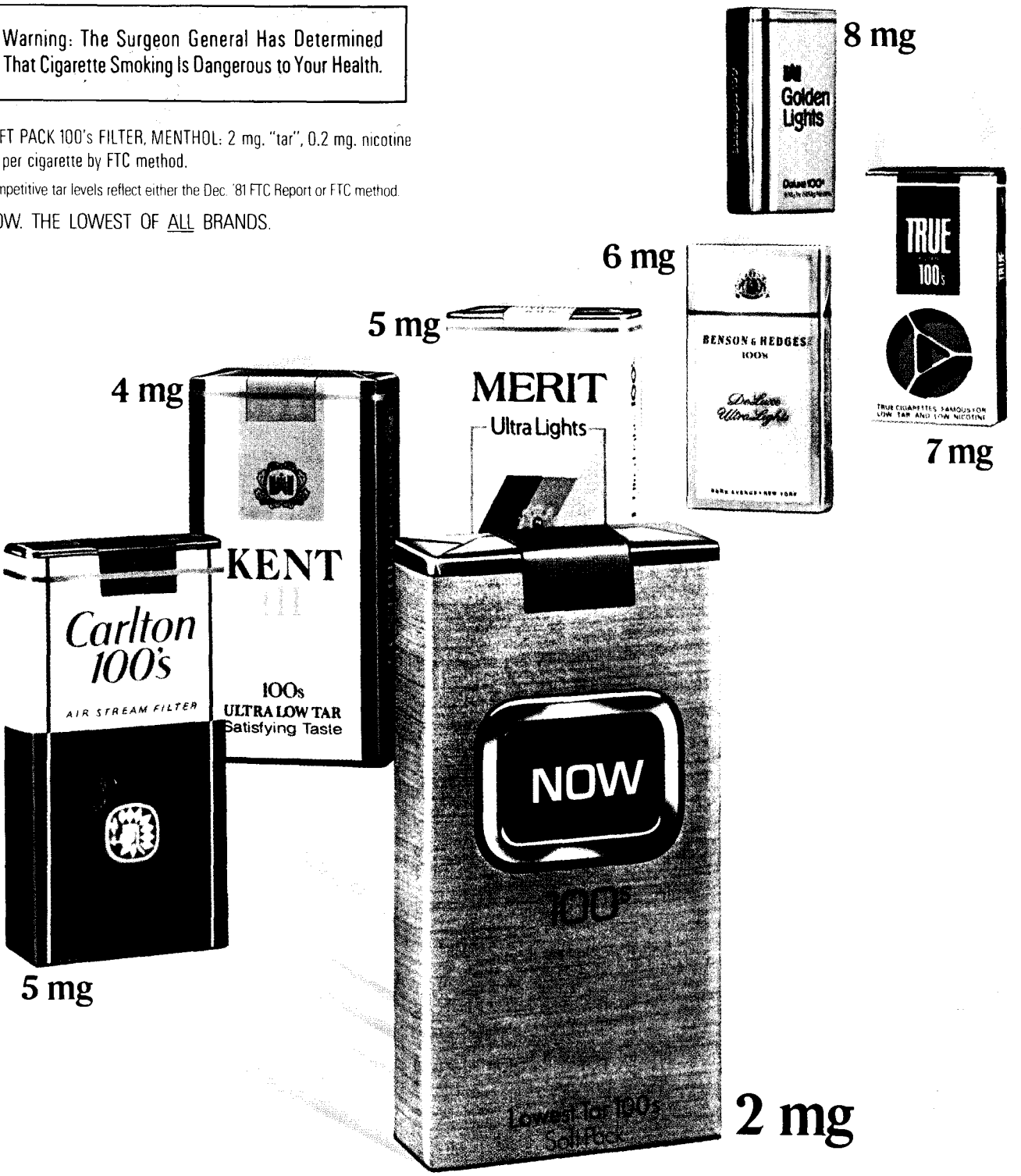

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